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HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND PRACTICES ADAPTED TO CONTEMPORARY DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

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Purpose of the article: *The article aims to examine how human resource management policies and practices can be adapted to current demographic trends shaped by globalization, international mobility, and the shrinking active population. It focuses on identifying effective managerial mechanisms that enable both private and public sector organizations to address labor market imbalances caused by population aging, migration, and low birth rates, ensuring the sustainability of human capital and long-term competitiveness.*

Methodology: *The research is based on statistical and comparative analyses of demographic and labor market data, exploring the correlation between employment indicators, migration patterns, and workforce dynamics. Applied studies on migrant integration and employee retention practices are also included, emphasizing flexible recruitment, continuous professional training, and motivation strategies adapted to generational diversity.*

Conclusions: *The results highlight that demographic shifts require innovative and adaptive approaches in human resource management. Strengthened collaboration among the state, business environment, and educational institutions is necessary to design coherent public policies that enhance labor market resilience, productivity, and sustainability.*

Originality: *The originality of the article lies in its integrated approach connecting demographic evolution with innovative managerial practices, offering a comprehensive perspective on how demographic change influences human capital sustainability and organizational competitiveness.*

Keywords: *Human resources, Management, Public policies, Demographic trends, Sustainability, Competitiveness.*
JEL Classifications*: J11, M12, O15*

INTRODUCTION

Demographic transformations over the past two decades represent one of the most significant socio-economic phenomena of the contemporary world, with profound implications for the structure of the labor market and the way entities manage human resources. The global population is undergoing an accelerated ageing process, driven by the steady decline in birth rates, the increase in life expectancy, and the reduction in mortality rates. These developments are reshaping the age pyramid, as the proportion of people aged over 60 continues to rise, while the segment of the young, working-age population is shrinking.

In the European Union, the birth rate in recent years has remained below the generational replacement level, ranging between 1.5 and 1.6 children per woman compared to the threshold of 2.1 required for demographic stability. At the same time, the share of the population aged over 65 exceeds 21% of the total population. Countries such as Italy, Germany, and Portugal already register a demographic dependency ratio of over 35%, meaning that for every 100 active individuals, there are 35 elderly persons or pensioners. In contrast, the Nordic countries and France, although facing the same demographic tendencies, have managed to maintain a more balanced demographic structure due

to proactive social and family policies, which include financial support for parents, extended parental leave, and accessible early childcare services.

This ageing of the active population generates a series of direct implications for the labor market and overall economic balance. First, there is a steady decline in the number of graduates and young employees, which limits the capacity for workforce renewal and affects the dynamics of innovative sectors. Second, the economic environment is facing an increasingly pronounced skills shortage, particularly in strategic areas such as information technology, healthcare, education, and industrial production. This skills deficit reduces competitiveness and slows down the process of adaptation to new technologies. Third, social protection systems are under growing financial pressure due to rising expenditures on pensions, healthcare services, and social assistance, while the base of active contributors is simultaneously shrinking. Overall, these effects outline a complex structural dynamic in which the sustainability of the labor market depends increasingly on the ability of institutions and entities to efficiently manage the demographic transition through proactive policies of integration, training, and retention of human resources (Eurostat, 2024).

On the other hand, the participation and employment of older workers have increased significantly over the past decade as a result of extending the retirement age, rising life expectancy, and European policies promoting active ageing. According to Eurostat data (2024), the average employment rate among individuals aged 55 to 64 has reached 63%, compared to only 46% in 2010. However, these averages conceal considerable differences between countries: in Sweden, Denmark, and Germany, more than 70% of individuals in this age group remain professionally active, while in Croatia, Greece, and Romania the level is below 50%. This diversity indicates that cultural, economic, and institutional factors decisively influence both the willingness and the ability of senior workers to remain in employment (Eurostat, 2024). Countries with more flexible labor markets, continuous training policies, and inclusive organizational cultures manage to capitalize on the experience of mature generations, transforming advanced age into a competitive advantage rather than an economic burden.

At the same time, the international mobility of the labor force has intensified, and positive net migration in developed countries has become a mechanism for compensating the decline in their local active population. Western European states attract young workers from Central and Eastern Europe, Asia, or North Africa, which allows them to temporarily alleviate the skills shortage. Conversely, source countries such as the Republic of Moldova face negative net migration, losing tens of thousands of qualified specialists annually, which leads to a reduction in the domestic recruitment base and to structural imbalances between the demand for and supply of labor.

The effects of these transformations on human resource management are complex: organizations must rethink their processes of planning, recruitment, and professional development to respond to demographic realities. Traditional management, predominantly oriented toward young employees, is becoming insufficient. In the new context, the focus shifts toward generational inclusiveness, organizational adaptability, and sustainable strategies for developing human capital. An increasing number of entities adopt flexible work policies, invest in upskilling programs, and encourage intergenerational mentoring, recognizing the value of the professional experience of senior employees.

Demographic transformations affect not only the structure of the population but also the way economic competitiveness is built and maintained. An adequate response to these shifts requires coherent public policies, reforms of professional training systems, and an organizational culture that views age diversity as a strategic resource rather than a limitation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research methodology combined both quantitative and qualitative approaches in order to analyze the impact of demographic transformations on human resource management policies and to identify the institutional adaptation mechanisms to these changes. Within the quantitative approach,

the main demographic indicators were examined, including birth rate, life expectancy, the share of the elderly population, employment rate, and net migration, based on statistical series provided by Eurostat, the ILO, the OECD, the United Nations, and the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova. The analysis included the calculation of correlations between demographic indicators and labor market indicators, highlighting the relationships between population ageing and employment dynamics.

The qualitative approach focused on the comparative analysis of human resource policies and practices implemented across different sectors – public, private, and international – with the aim of identifying best practices and applicable models for the context of the Republic of Moldova. In this regard, relevant strategic documents were consulted, such as the National Employment Strategy 2024–2030, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the European Skills Agenda.

The instruments used included correlation analysis, SWOT analysis of the human resource management system in relation to demographic trends, and exploratory interviews with human resource managers from public and private entities, designed to capture perceptions regarding the challenges generated by the decline in the active population and generational diversity.

This methodological combination enabled the development of an integrated perspective that links the statistical dimension of demographic change with the managerial dimension of adapting human resources, contributing to the formulation of sustainable solutions for the labor market in the Republic of Moldova and the wider European context.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of demographic and economic data highlights a series of profound trends that directly influence human resource management policies and practices at both the European and national levels. Over the past decade, the ageing of the active population has accelerated in most European states, while the decline in birth rates has become a persistent phenomenon.

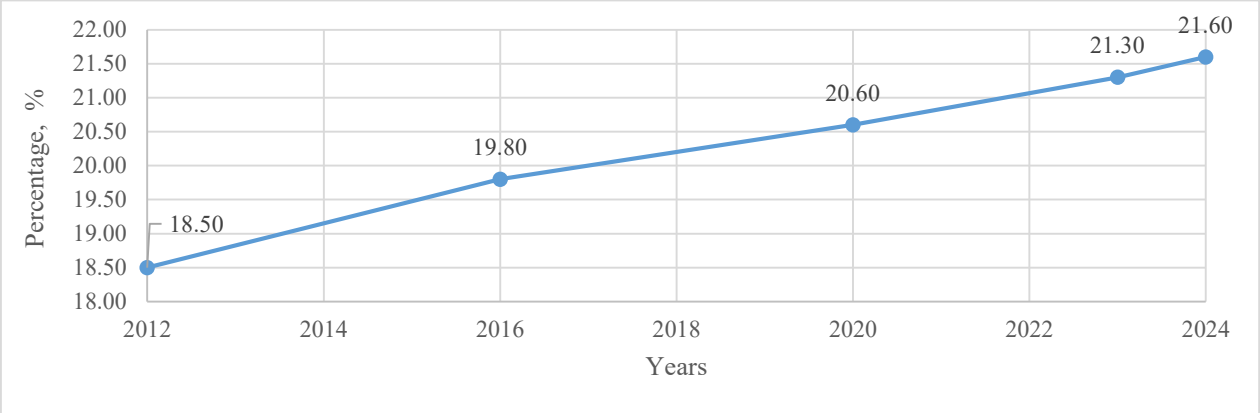


Figure 1. Share of the Population Aged 65+ in the Total EU Population (2012–2024).
Source: *elaborated by the authors based on data Eurostat, 2024.*

According to Eurostat data (Figure 1), the share of individuals aged over 65 in the total population of the European Union has increased, while the birth rate has remained below the generational replacement level. The upward trend of the curve indicates a continuous pattern of demographic ageing characteristic of most EU Member States.

In 2012, the population aged 65 and over accounted for 18.5% of the total population, and by 2024 this share had risen to 21.6%, representing an increase of 3.1 percentage points over a 12-year period. This growth reflects not only progress in healthcare and rising life expectancy, but also the cumulative effect of declining birth rates and the shrinking young population.

It can be observed that the pace of increase was more pronounced between 2012 and 2016, when the share of the elderly population rose by approximately 1.3 percentage points, coinciding with

the entry of the "baby boom" generation into the 65+ age group. During the 2016–2020 period, the pace slowed slightly, yet the upward trend continued, reaching 20.6%. After 2020, a renewed acceleration of the ageing process is evident, driven by the continued decline in birth rates and the increase in life expectancy, reaching 21.6% in 2024.

The analysis once again confirms that the ageing of the European population is no longer an isolated phenomenon but an irreversible structural trend with significant economic, social, and managerial implications. This evolution requires a strategic response from public institutions and the business sector, focused on the sustainability of human capital and the intergenerational balance within the labor market.

In the context of contemporary demographic transformations, population ageing in the Republic of Moldova represents one of the most significant challenges for human resource management and for the governance of economic entities. The increasing proportion of elderly individuals and the shrinking segment of the young population generate profound changes in the structure of the labor force, influencing both internal organizational processes and the ability of entities to maintain competitiveness in a dynamic economic environment.

The ageing coefficient is one of the most important demographic indicators used to assess the age structure and the degree of population maturation. In the context of the Republic of Moldova, the ageing coefficient has become an essential tool for understanding current demographic imbalances, as it synthesizes the simultaneous evolution of two major phenomena: the decline of the young population and the expansion of the elderly population segment.

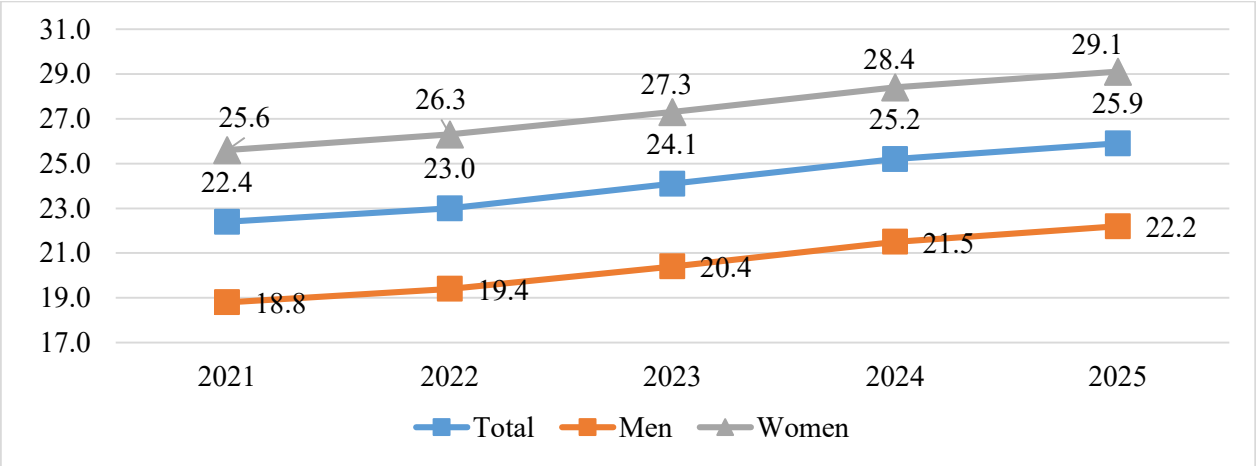


Figure 2. Evolution of the population ageing coefficient in the Republic of Moldova as of 1 January.

Source: *elaborated by the authors based on data NBS, 2024.*

The data on the population ageing coefficient for the period 2021-2025 (Figure 2) highlight a steady increase in the share of elderly individuals within the population structure of the Republic of Moldova, confirming the intensification of demographic processes that directly influence developments in the labor market. At the overall level, the indicator rises from 22.4% in 2021 to 25.9% in 2025, reflecting the progressive maturation of the age pyramid and the growing demographic pressure on the active population segment.

The gender-based analysis reveals structural differences relevant for understanding the correlations between ageing and employment behavior. Among men, the coefficient increases from 18.8% to 22.2%, yet remains below the general average - an aspect correlated with lower life expectancy and reduced presence in the older age groups. In contrast, the coefficient for women rises from 25.6% to 29.1%, reflecting their predominance in the upper age segments and the intensification of the feminization of demographic ageing. This structure has direct implications for differentiated

labor market participation, inactivity rates, and the need to develop employment policies adapted to the characteristics of each demographic group.

Overall, the continuous growth of the ageing coefficient, together with gender disparities, highlights the consolidation of demographic trends that are reshaping the balance between the active and inactive population. These developments underline the necessity of adjusting socio-economic policies and labor market strategies so that they can effectively respond to the new demographic realities and their impact on the structure and dynamics of employment.

From a managerial perspective, the ageing of the active population requires a reconsideration of how human resources are planned, developed, and utilized. The expansion of the 50–64 and 65+ age groups necessitates adjustments in recruitment policies, continuous training, motivation, occupational health, and knowledge transfer, given that senior employees exhibit both strengths-experience, stability, and professional expertise-and vulnerabilities associated with declining physical capacity or reduced adaptability to new technologies. Simultaneously, the contraction of younger cohorts diminishes the potential for skills renewal and complicates succession planning for key positions.

Demographic ageing also places additional pressure on the sustainability of the labor system, creating an imbalance between the demand for qualified personnel and the actual supply available on the market (Armstrong, 2014). Managers are therefore compelled to adopt strategies focused on employee retention, flexible working arrangements, digitalization, and the promotion of organizational well-being in order to maintain productivity in a context where the workforce is becoming increasingly mature.

Furthermore, demographic shifts influence strategic planning at both the macroeconomic and microeconomic levels. An entity that fails to consider ageing trends in its human resource management risks encountering skills shortages, increased personnel replacement costs, and a decline in innovation capacity (Sârbu, Corețchi, 2024).

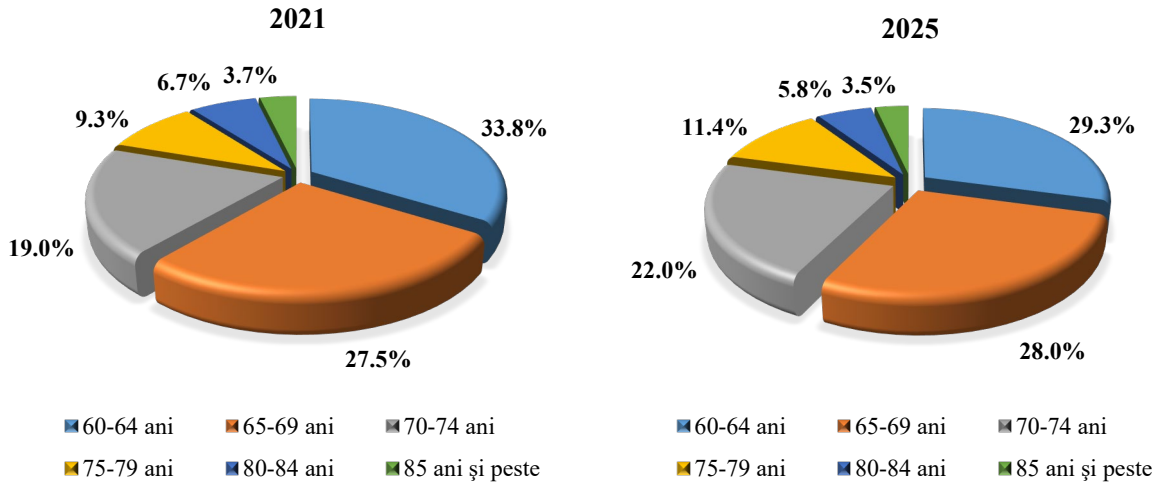


Figure 3. Population Aged 60 and Over by Age Groups, as of 1 January 2021 and 2025.
Source: *elaborated by the authors based on data NBS, 2025.*

For this reason, integrating demographic analysis into managerial processes becomes an essential requirement for adapting to the structural realities of the labor market in the Republic of Moldova.

The absolute number of individuals aged 60 and over reached 616.5 thousand in 2025 (Figure 3), representing a significant increase compared to the situation five years earlier and confirming the continuous expansion of the elderly population segment. In parallel, the share of this category in the total population increased from 22.4% in 2021 to 25.9% in 2025, indicating a clear intensification of demographic ageing at the national level. This evolution has direct implications for the ability of

entities to ensure a sufficient influx of young, flexible, and innovative personnel, placing growing pressure on managers to redesign human resource policies, invest in continuous training, and strategically capitalize on the professional experience of senior employees.

The analysis of the internal structure of the elderly population reveals trends relevant to the field of human resource management. Between 2021 and 2025, the 70–74 age group increased from 19.0% to 22.0%, reflecting the progression of generations into older age stages and the consolidation of the advanced-age population segment. At the same time, the 60–64 age group decreased from 33.8% to 29.3%, suggesting a narrowing of the cohorts entering the elderly population and a shift in the dynamics of transitions between age groups. For organizations, this reality translates into the need to adjust workforce planning, adopt intergenerational mentoring programs, and design working conditions adapted to the characteristics of older employees, with a view to maintaining organizational performance and competitiveness in the long run.

Therefore, the evolution of the elderly population during 2021–2025 highlights a dual ageing process: quantitative, through the increase in the total number of individuals aged 60 and over, and qualitative, through the significant shift toward advanced age groups, particularly 70–74 years and 75+ years. This phenomenon confirms the accelerated demographic maturation of the population of the Republic of Moldova and underscores the necessity for managerial policies adapted to the new demographic reality.

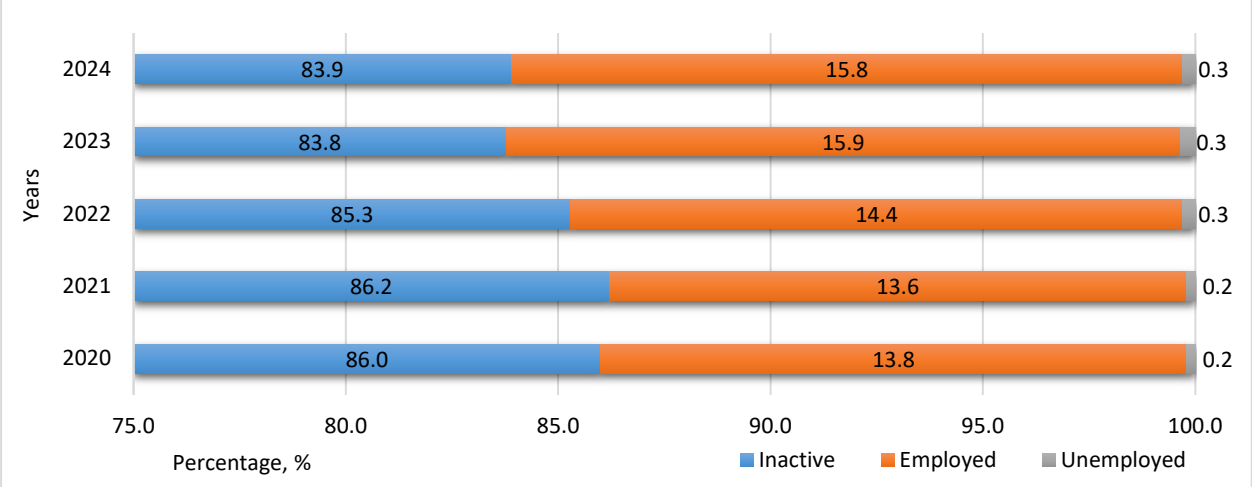


Figure 4. Distribution of Individuals Aged 60 and Over by Participation in Economic Activity in the Republic of Moldova

Source: *elaborated by the authors based on data NBS, 2025.*

The analysis of the population aged 60 and over, according to their participation in economic activity during the period 2020–2024 (Figure 4), highlights important changes in the professional behaviour of older individuals in the Republic of Moldova. The data show that the segment of inactive persons continues to predominate, accounting for between 83.8% and 86.2% of the total elderly population. However, a gradual decrease in their share can be observed, from 86.0% in 2020 to 83.9% in 2024. This decline, although moderate, suggests an increasing willingness or necessity for older individuals to remain active in the labor market, against the backdrop of an intensified labor shortage and growing individual economic pressures.

At the same time, the share of employed elderly persons has followed an upward trend, rising from 13.8% in 2020 to 15.9% in 2023 and remaining at a similar level in 2024. This increase indicates a growing involvement of senior citizens in economic activity, driven mainly by the expansion of flexible employment opportunities, the need to compensate for skills shortages in certain sectors, and the increasing interest in extending professional life. The stabilization at around 16% suggests that

the economic participation of older individuals is not an isolated phenomenon but rather a consolidating structural trend.

With regard to the unemployment rate, it remains extremely low throughout the period analyzed, fluctuating between 0.2% and 0.3%. This very low unemployment level among individuals aged 60 and over does not necessarily reflect their efficient integration into the labor market, but rather their predominant orientation toward inactivity in the event of job loss, as well as their limited engagement with employment services. Among older individuals, unemployed status is rarely assumed; in most cases, they opt for complete withdrawal from economic activity.

Overall, the evolution of the data for the period 2020–2024 outlines the image of a predominantly inactive elderly population, yet one displaying a growing interest in participating in economic activity. The increase in the share of employed older individuals and the decrease in the proportion of inactive persons suggest a gradual adaptation of the professional behaviour of the elderly, in parallel with changes in the labor market and current economic requirements. This trend indicates that harnessing the potential of senior workers is becoming an increasingly important component for ensuring the efficient functioning of the labor market and maintaining socio-economic balance in a demographic context dominated by ageing.

The birth rate is an important factor in determining demographic dynamics, having a direct impact on population structure and the availability of labor resources. A significant decline in birth rates affects both the labor market, through the reduction in the number of young active individuals, and the long-term sustainability of economic and social systems. The analysis of the main birth rate indicators for the period 2020–2024 reveals a series of significant changes that reflect demographic trends in the Republic of Moldova and that have direct implications for the labor market and human resource policies.

Table 1. Main birth rate indicators for the years 2020–2024

Indicators	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	**2024 as a percentage of 2020, %**
Live births, persons	30,834	29,320	27,018	24,123	23,648	76.7
male	16,167	15,113	13,950	12,294	12,126	98.6
female	14,667	14,207	13,068	11,829	11,522	97.4
Birth rate *(live births per 1,000 inhabitants),* %	11.7	11.3	10.7	9.8	9.8	83.8
Average age of mother at first birth, years	25.1	25.1	25.3	25.3	26.8	106.8
Average age of mother at all births, years	28.8	28.9	29.2	29.3	29.6	102.8
Total fertility rate *(average number of children born to a woman during her fertile life, under the fertility conditions of the respective year)*	1.76	1.75	1.70	1.62	1.66	94.3

Source: *elaborated by the authors based on data NBS, 2024.*

The absolute number of live births recorded in 2024 was 23,648, representing only 76.7% of the value registered in 2020. This continuous decline reflects a persistently low birth rate, driven by factors such as difficult economic conditions, the forced migration of young talent, and changing social values that lead to the postponement of marriage and childbirth. This decrease in birth rates has significant long-term implications for the labor force, particularly by increasing the shortage of young workers entering the labor market. Organizations will face a reduced pool of young talent, which will place pressure on recruitment, retention, and continuous training strategies. Moreover, professional training systems will need to adapt to compensate for the skills losses generated by an increasingly ageing population.

Sex-disaggregated data show a smaller decline in the number of male births compared to female births. In 2024, the number of male births was 12,126, representing a decrease of 1.3% compared to 2020, while the number of female births reached 11,522, a decrease of 2.9% compared to 2020. This confirms a general trend toward the feminization of births, a phenomenon observed in other European countries as well, which may have implications for the future gender structure of the labor market. Such a difference may influence organizational diversity and inclusion strategies, in which the integration of women into traditionally male-dominated sectors will become a priority, while in female-dominated sectors, greater attention will be required for policies aimed at reducing gender gaps in promotion opportunities and wages.

The birth rate, expressed as the number of live births per 1,000 inhabitants, recorded a continuous decline from 11.7‰ in 2020 to 9.8‰ in 2024, representing a significant decrease of 16.2% compared to 2020. This trend reflects a decline in the young population and a long-term reduction in available human resources. In this context, the need to implement active recruitment and retention policies becomes evident, particularly in economic sectors where migration and low birth rates have a major impact. Organizations will need to focus on diversifying recruitment sources and adapting jobs for senior employees as a compensatory measure for the shortage of young personnel, thereby ensuring a sustainable long-term workforce.

The average age of mothers at first birth increased from 25.1 years in 2020 to 26.8 years in 2024, indicating a trend toward postponing childbirth and delaying family formation. This phenomenon is correlated with changes in social and economic behavior, as young people increasingly prioritize career development before starting a family, against a backdrop of economic pressures and financial uncertainty. These trends will be reflected in shifts in the composition of the labor force, with fewer young individuals available on the labor market, and organizations will need to rethink their recruitment and retention policies to attract and retain employees from older age groups. Additionally, policies supporting work–life balance will need to be promoted to support young mothers who will remain active in the labor market for longer periods.

The total fertility rate decreased from 1.76 in 2020 to 1.66 in 2024, representing a significant reduction in the average number of children born to a woman during her reproductive years. This trend is similar to that observed in many Central and Eastern European countries, where economic and social factors contribute to reduced interest in family formation. This decline in fertility will deepen the labor force shortage, and organizations will need to adopt more effective strategies for integrating age diversity and supporting continuous professional training to compensate for the reduced number of qualified young workers. Moreover, organizations will be required to invest in family-support measures and work–life balance policies in order to encourage the active participation of women and young mothers in the labor market.

In Central and Eastern European countries, including the Republic of Moldova, the process of demographic ageing is driven not only by declining birth rates but also by the massive external migration of young and economically active individuals. This phenomenon has become structural, generating deep imbalances between the demand for and supply of labor, particularly in sectors requiring technical, medical, and educational skills. Labor migration is one of the defining elements of the demographic and economic transformations in the Republic of Moldova (Nirean, Coreţchi, 2020).

During the period 2010-2015, the external mobility of workers remained at high levels, stimulated by significant wage disparities compared to host countries, limited opportunities in the domestic labor market, and the prolonged effects of the global economic crisis. In this stage, migration was predominantly male, and the age structure showed a strong prevalence of the 25-34 age group, which represented approximately 40% of economically active migrants. This category, characterized by professional mobility, high adaptability, and strong demand on external labor markets, constituted the core of Moldovan migration.

In the period 2016-2020, a geographic and occupational reconfiguration of migration can be observed. While in the early part of the decade most workers oriented themselves toward CIS

countries, particularly the Russian Federation, this period is marked by an increasing proportion of migrants choosing European Union countries. At the same time, the profile of the migrant becomes more diverse: alongside construction and agricultural workers, there is a growing number of individuals employed in services, logistics, hospitality (HORECA), and caregiving sectors. The share of women migrating for work also increases, reaching approximately 40-45% of migrant workers. The 20-39 age group, however, remains dominant, accounting for 65-70% of all individuals working abroad.

The period 2021-2025 is characterized by an unprecedented intensification of youth migration, caused by recent economic and social shocks: the energy crisis, accelerated inflation, regional instability, and expanding mobility opportunities within the European area. During this time, the migration of individuals with higher education becomes increasingly evident, particularly in IT, healthcare, and service sectors, exacerbating the skills shortage in critical areas of the national economy (Sârbu, 2025). Consolidated data for 2023-2024 indicate that individuals aged 20-34 represent between 39% and 45% of active migrants, while the 35-44 age group accounts for approximately 25-30%. Therefore, migration directly affects the younger cohorts-those expected to ensure the renewal and dynamism of the domestic labor force.

In the context of international migration, the reintegration of migrants represents a strategic priority for the Republic of Moldova, with significant economic, social, and cultural implications. In a period marked by complex demographic processes-such as declining birth rates and the migration of young talent-the state has recognized the importance of reintegration in its public policy documents, including the National Program for Stimulating Returns and Facilitating the (Re)Integration of Citizens of the Republic of Moldova Involved in Migration for the Years 2023-2027, the National Migration and Asylum Program for the Years 2026-2030, as well as various economic development strategies. Migration and the return of migrants place pressure on the state's capacity to integrate these citizens into the labor market and society, and the concerns of the authorities in this field are multiple and complex (HG, no. 674/2023).

Within public policies, authorities acknowledge that migration can generate significant economic benefits through the transfer of intellectual capital, knowledge, and professional experience accumulated by migrants in destination countries. These benefits can contribute to the country's economic development, particularly through the financial investments made by migrants upon their return. Consequently, the state focuses on creating a supportive framework for reintegration, including economic measures as well as social and educational support policies designed to help migrants adapt to local conditions.

One of the major concerns of the authorities is the lack of an integrated coordination mechanism between public institutions and non-governmental organizations in the migrant reintegration process. Authorities recognize shortcomings in migrants' access to relevant information about support services and professional retraining, which makes their integration into the labor market more difficult. In this context, the need for an integrated system of information and services that ensures returning migrants quick and easy access to reintegration opportunities is evident.

One of the main economic obstacles to the integration of migrants is the recognition of professional qualifications obtained abroad. Many migrants face significant difficulties in equating diplomas and certificates earned during their international employment, which limits their access to jobs that correspond to their level of training. Another major issue is the lack of adequate employment opportunities in the fields for which migrants are qualified, a challenge that is particularly pronounced in rural areas, where the local economy is less diversified and the demand for highly qualified labor is low.

The social and psychosocial challenges associated with the return of migrants are also significant. In many cases, returning migrants-particularly women and mixed families-face difficulties related to social adaptation, isolation within local communities, and family conflicts. These issues are exacerbated by the lack of dedicated psychosocial support services that would help migrants overcome the trauma and stress associated with migration and return.

To address these problems and to implement a human resource management approach aligned with contemporary demographic trends, the state must adopt an integrated and coordinated framework for reintegration policies. Essential measures include the creation of a national integrated information and support system through the implementation of an effective coordination mechanism between public institutions, non-governmental organizations, and other entities providing services to returning migrants (Coreţchi, Bujor, 2024). This system should include online platforms, local information centers, and personalized counselling services to ensure quick and easy access to the information necessary for migrant reintegration.

Additionally, it is necessary to support the recognition and equivalence of professional qualifications, diplomas, and certificates obtained abroad by developing a transparent and accessible system that enables migrants to integrate rapidly into the labor market under conditions matching their professional training. At the same time, the state should offer economic incentives to employers who recruit returning migrants. These incentives could include tax exemptions or wage subsidies, while also promoting local economic projects that contribute to job creation, particularly in rural regions.

Furthermore, the implementation of psychosocial support programs is essential, given that migrants must overcome barriers related to returning to the country and integrating into local communities. Such programs may include psychological counselling, social integration workshops, and support groups for women and mixed families, thereby fostering more effective social integration and preventing the risk of isolation.

The integration and reintegration of migrants into the labor market in the Republic of Moldova is a complex process that requires coordinated action at both national and local levels. The measures mentioned above are essential for the success of migrant reintegration, offering them real opportunities to contribute to the economic and social development of the country. Their effective implementation will help strengthen social cohesion and improve Moldova's human capital, in line with the new demographic and economic trends in the region.

Complex demographic developments, characterized simultaneously by the persistent migration of the young population and the increasing share of older workers, affect not only the numerical size of the labor force but also profoundly reshape the entire structure of the labor market in the Republic of Moldova. The shrinking of the active segment-driven by the continuous decline in birth rates and the emigration of economically active individuals-leads to an increasingly severe skills shortage in strategic sectors such as healthcare, education, manufacturing, and information technology. At the same time, pressure on the public pension system and on social services intensifies as the demographic dependency ratio deteriorates, reflecting a decreasing number of active contributors and a growing number of beneficiaries.

CONCLUSIONS

Demographic changes, particularly population ageing and declining birth rates, have a direct impact on the structure of the labor market. This shift is reflected in the decreasing number of young people entering the workforce and the increasing proportion of older individuals, creating significant pressure on the economy. A smaller active population will lead to skills shortages in key economic sectors, a phenomenon further amplified by the migration of young talent seeking better employment and educational opportunities abroad. In this context, it is essential that human resource policies be adapted to attract and retain young workers, while also capitalizing on the experience of senior employees, who can contribute significantly to productivity growth and innovation within organizations.

The migration of young talent represents a major phenomenon with substantial economic implications. In the Republic of Moldova in particular, the outflow of skilled young individuals in search of better employment and education opportunities results in a considerable loss of essential human capital for sustainable economic development. Between 2012 and 2024, numerous key

economic sectors-including information technology, education, and healthcare-experienced a significant decline in qualified human resources, highlighting the need for innovative retention and recruitment strategies. These strategies should include continuous professional training programs, financial incentives, and policies that support the internal mobility of the workforce, in order to compensate for talent loss and sustain the long-term development of the labor market.

In the context of an ageing population, it becomes increasingly important for organizations to adopt an intergenerational approach to human resource management. This model involves the active integration of employees from different age groups, from talented young workers to highly experienced seniors. Senior employees can add substantial value to organizations through mentoring, training young talent, and facilitating knowledge transfer. At the same time, it is essential for organizations to provide flexible working conditions and opportunities for professional retraining for older employees so that they can continue contributing to organizational development. In parallel, younger employees must benefit from support for skill development and from policies that promote workplace diversity.

In the face of demographic challenges, human resource policies must become more flexible and oriented toward enhancing organizational adaptability amid rapid labor market changes. In particular, organizations need to implement policies that support diversity and inclusion within the workforce, offering equal opportunities to all employees regardless of age, gender, or other demographic characteristics. These policies should focus on attracting young talent, as well as retaining senior employees, through adapted working conditions, social protection measures, and work–life balance policies.

Technology is advancing rapidly and offers innovative solutions that can support the integration of both senior employees and young talent into the labor market. Teleworking and flexible work arrangements are becoming increasingly attractive options for both age groups, and organizations must adopt the necessary technologies to facilitate these forms of work. Digital platforms and remote collaboration tools will enable the integration of senior employees by reducing barriers related to distance or accessibility. In addition, it is necessary to promote training programs aimed at adapting to emerging technologies, particularly for senior workers, in order to help them remain relevant and active in the labor market.

With declining birth rates and the migration of young talent, ensuring the continuity of the workforce by compensating for the shortage of human resources becomes a key priority. Organizations will need to invest in continuous education and professional retraining for their employees, offering opportunities for training and development to address skills gaps and support adaptation to new labor market requirements. These initiatives must be supported through partnerships with educational and training institutions, in order to ensure the continuation of the learning process throughout the entire professional lifecycle.

Recommendations for implementing the necessary changes:

- Develop intergenerational human resource policies that support integration and collaboration among employees of different age groups.
- Implement innovative retention and recruitment strategies focused on attracting young talent and retaining senior employees in the workforce.
- Invest in continuous education and training, offering employees opportunities for reskilling and professional development.
- Promote flexible work arrangements and the use of digital technologies to support all categories of employees in adapting to new forms of work.

By adopting these measures, organizations will be better equipped to address demographic challenges, ensuring their long-term sustainability and competitiveness.

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