



Population and family planning policies in Vietnam from 1961 to 2020

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Abstract

Family planning in Vietnam has become a long way and made remarkable achievements. In the past, the population-family planning policy focused on only one content: family planning to reduce births. Now, the population policy will focus on population and development. This is a significant turning point of Vietnam's population policy in a new period with more content and a broader scope. Therefore, this article will focus on clarifying the changes in population policy from 1961 to the present (the year 2020), thereby give some suggestions for better population policy implementation in the future.

Keywords: population, family planning, Vietnam

Introduction

Vietnam's population is emerging new trends, which both bring opportunities and create challenges for sustainable development in our country, such as: Golden population structure, imbalance in sex ratio at birth, population aging, the fertility rate between regions remains significantly different; the quality of the population has increased but not yet high, migration is strong, and the population distribution remains inadequate. Today's population situation is entirely different from that of more than half a century ago. Therefore, it is time to tackle population issues comprehensively, not merely family planning. Thus, Resolution No. 21 / NQ-TW of the Sixth Conference of the Central Committee of the Communist Party Term XII has oriented Vietnam's population policy in the coming time: "Continue to shift the policy focus population from family planning to population and development. Population work must comprehensively focus on size, structure, distribution, especially population quality, and put in an organic relationship with economic, social, national defense, and security factors and ensure rapid and sustainable development".

Shifting the focus of population policy is relevant to already low fertility and addressing emerging population problems. However, it should be emphasized that, in the new situation, family planning is no longer the "focus" of the population policy, rather than "abandoning" family planning.

This work needs maintaining firmly, but with new goals and new implementation methods (Nguyen Dinh Cu, 2019) ^[3]. It remains to be affirmed that family planning is a radical measure to help solve population problems and improve life quality. In addition to limiting population growth, family planning also aims to protect the health of women and children and bring happiness to the family (Lam Ha, 2018) ^[1].

Therefore, this article will focus on clarifying the changes in population policy from 1961 to the present, thereby giving some suggestions for better population policy implementation in the future.

Family Planning Policies from 1961 to 2020 from 1961 to 1975: Vietnam became one of Asia's first countries to implement a population family planning program

On December 26, 1961, Prime Minister Pham Van Dong signed a decision to issue a "guided birth". Vietnam became one of the first countries in Asia to implement a population family planning program. This time policy is mainly advocacy, convincing people to participate in implementing family planning to achieve the goal of birth restriction. The main subjects are women of reproductive age with many children, cadres, workers, employees, and soldiers; then expanded in population. The campaign for childbirth planning is launched with the goal of the mother's health, for the happiness and harmony of the family, for the sake of caring for the children.

During this period, there were still many difficulties. Even the population and family planning work had achieved encouraging initial results: The population growth rate in 1960 was very high, 3.8% a year, the consequence of the born too high. In 1975 the population growth rate decreased from 3.8% in 1961 to 2.5%. The average number of children per woman of reproductive age has dropped from 6.3 children in 1961 to 5.25 in 1975 (Nam Phuong and Le Phuong, 2017) ^[2].

The period from 1975 to 1990: Apply the reward and penalty policy

For the first time, the population indicators were included in the Resolution of the Party's National Congress. The population size in this period was approximately 48 million people and increased to 52.7 million in 1979. Due to the cumulative increase in population after the war and North-South migration, the southern provinces' population growth rate is high (Nam Phuong and Le Phuong, 2017) ^[2]. This periodic fertility policy encourages couples to limit their births and encourage families to only have 1 to 2 children, stopping at two children except for some exceptional

Cases such as children with disabilities in mountainous areas. This policy applies to all women of reproductive age and married men of reproductive age, emphasizing state employees and the armed forces. For ethnic minorities, it is not a question of slowing down population growth but protecting mothers and children.

In this period, the commendation and punishment policy was applied. A family with two children is provided with land, house construction, and house distribution. Families with three or more children cannot import into inner cities, towns, and industrial zones. Families with an excess of the prescribed number must contribute to the social protection fund. Husband and wife do not exercise the rights to regulate the number of children. The direct management agency has an appropriate sanction.

As a result, the population growth rate decreased from 2.4% in 1975 to 1.9% in 1990. The average number of children per woman of reproductive age decreased from 5.25 to 3.8. This result has lowered the population growth rate but has not yet met the set target (Nam Phuung and Le Phuong, 2017) ^[2].

The period from 1991 to 2000: Stop at 2 children to raise them well

In 1991, Vietnam's population reached 67.2 million People

(General Statistics Office, 2020). If it continued to increase by 2%, after about 30 years, the population would double. Therefore, the 5th Central Executive Committee's Meeting proposed the goal "to make families with few and healthy children creating conditions for a prosperous and happy life", "each family has only 1 or 2 children.

". Arable land is allocated based on a family size of 2 children, modifying the housing allocation policy according to the number of people, using the standard of 2 children as the norm of housing for staff, no consideration for promotion and promotion function, dismissal; no nomination for the Party Committee, People's Council. The campaign "Stop at two children to raise and teach well" spread widely and was responded to by the people.

In June 1991, Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet decided to establish a specialized department to do population work.

As a result, in the period 1991-2000, exceeding the targets, the total fertility rate decreased rapidly from 3.8 children in 1991 to 2.3 in 2000, 0.6 children lower than the target of 2.9. The population size increased by 67.2 million in 1991 to 77.6 million in 2000, lower than 4.4 million. The population growth rate also decreased gradually over the period, from 1.92% in 1990 to 1.35% in 2000 (Table 1).

Table 1: Size and rate of population growth in the period 1990-2000

Total (Thousand of People)	Total	Male	Female	City	Urban
1990	66.016,70	32.202,80	33.813,90	12.880,30	53.136,40
1991	67.242,40	32.814,30	34.428,10	13.227,50	54.014,90
1992	68.450,10	33.424,20	35.025,90	13.587,60	54.862,50
1993	69.644,50	34.028,30	35.616,20	13.961,20	55.683,30
1994	70.824,50	34.633,20	36.191,30	14.425,60	56.398,90
1995	71.995,50	35.237,40	36.758,10	14.938,10	57.057,40
1996	73.156,70	35.857,30	37.299,40	15.419,90	57.736,80
1997	74.306,90	36.473,10	37.833,80	16.835,40	57.471,50
1998	75.456,30	37.089,70	38.366,60	17.464,60	57.991,70
1999	76.596,70	37.662,10	38.934,60	18.081,60	58.515,10
2000	77.630,90	38.165,30	39.465,60	18.725,40	58.905,50
Increase rate -%					
1990	1,92	1,94	1,90	2,41	1,80
1991	1,86	1,90	1,82	2,70	1,65
1992	1,80	1,86	1,74	2,72	1,57
1993	1,74	1,81	1,69	2,75	1,50
1994	1,69	1,78	1,61	3,33	1,29
1995	1,65	1,74	1,57	3,55	1,17
1996	1,61	1,76	1,47	3,23	1,19
1997	1,57	1,72	1,43	9,18	-0,46
1998	1,55	1,69	1,41	3,74	0,91
1999	1,51	1,54	1,48	3,53	0,90
2000	1,35	1,34	1,36	3,32	0,74

Source: General Statistics Office (2020)

The period from 2001 to 2010: To encourage voluntarily giving birth to a golden population

Viet Nam enters the 21st century as it approaches replacement fertility. The goal of maintaining each couple has 1 or 2 children to stabilize the population size, ensure a reasonable population structure and distribution. The Ordinance on Population issued in 2003 stipulates that each couple and individual have the right to decide on the time of giving birth, the number of children, and the distance between births. The Ordinance has misinterpreted many people that the State encourages the birth of many children, causing the fertility rate and the third childbirth rate to increase

again, in 2003 the total fertility rate fell to 2.12 children but rose again in 2004 it was 2.23 children (Table 2). In 2009, this regulation was revised to "Every couple should have 1-2 children". Due to the declining fertility trend in some provinces, the population sector has a more flexible message to change to "Every couple should have two children". Also, in 2003, the Decree prohibits behaviors that prevent or force the implementation of family planning and sex selection of the fetus. These have ended a period of enforcement and turned to voluntary encouragement of people in family planning.

Table 2: Total fertility rate by urban and rural residence from 2001-2010

	Total	Urban	Rural
2001	2,25	1,86	2,38
2002	2,28	1,93	2,39
2003	2,12	1,70	2,30
2004	2,23	1,87	2,38
2005	2,11	1,73	2,28
2006	2,09	1,72	2,25
2007	2,07	1,70	2,22
2008	2,08	1,83	2,22
2009	2,03	1,81	2,14
2010	2,00	1,77	2,11

Source: General Statistics Office (2020)

As a result, by 2006, Viet Nam had achieved replacement fertility on target ten years earlier than the target. In 2007, Vietnam officially entered the period of golden population structure. This happened when the dependency ratio was common (the

population aged 0-14 and the population over 65 years old calculated on the population group 15-64) below 50%. The period of golden population structure is a rare opportunity that appears only once in the development history of each country, a great opportunity for the country's development if well utilized. In 2009, completing the fertility reduction target. The average number of children per woman of reproductive age has decreased by 4.3, from 6.3 in 1960 to 2.0 in 2010, while the worldwide average has decreased by 2, 5 children from 5 to 2.5. Average life expectancy in Vietnam increased by 33 years, from 40 years old in 1960 to 73 years old in 2010, while the average life expectancy in the world increased by only 21 years.

From 48 years to 69 years. The population growth rate decreased from 3.8% in 1960 to 1.05% in 2010. In the previous 20 years, scientists predicted that by 2010.

Vietnam's population would reach 105.5 million people. However, in fact, the population size in 2010 was 87 million people, lower than the forecast of 18.5 million people.

Table 3: Size and rate of population growth in the period 2001-2010

	Total	Male	Female	Urban	Rural
Total (Thousand of people)					
2001	78.620,50	38.656,40	39.964,10	19.299,10	59.321,40
2002	79.537,70	39.112,20	40.425,50	19.873,20	59.664,50
2003	80.467,40	39.535,00	40.932,40	20.725,00	59.742,40
2004	81.436,40	40.042,00	41.394,40	21.601,20	59.835,20
2005	82.392,10	40.521,50	41.870,60	22.332,00	60.060,10
2006	83.311,20	40.999,00	42.312,20	23.045,80	60.265,40
2007	84.218,50	41.447,30	42.771,20	23.746,30	60.472,20
2008	85.118,70	41.956,10	43.162,60	24.673,10	60.445,60
2009	86.025,00	42.523,40	43.501,60	25.584,70	60.440,30
2010	87.067,30	43.063,40	44.003,90	26.460,50	60.606,80
Increase rate -%					
2001	1,27	1,29	1,26	3,06	0,71
2002	1,17	1,18	1,15	2,97	0,58
2003	1,17	1,08	1,25	4,29	0,13
2004	1,20	1,28	1,13	4,23	0,16
2005	1,17	1,20	1,15	3,38	0,38
2006	1,12	1,18	1,05	3,20	0,34
2007	1,09	1,09	1,08	3,04	0,34
2008	1,07	1,23	0,92	3,90	-0,04
2009	1,06	1,35	0,79	3,69	-0,01
2010	1,21	1,27	1,15	3,42	0,28

Source: General Statistics Office (2020)

The period from 2011 to 2020: Aging population, recommending to loosen the regulation of having two children, shift the focus of population policy from family planning to population and development

In 2011, Vietnam officially entered the period of population aging (Table 4). A country is considered aging when the

proportion of the elderly (aged 60 and over) accounts for 10% of the total population or the proportion of people over 65 and accounts for 7% of the total population. If the proportion of people aged 60 and over accounts for more than 20% of the total population or 14% of the population aged 65 and over, that country is called the aging population.

Table 4: Proportion of population under 15 years old, 15-64 years old, 60 years old and older, 65 years old and older and the aging index in Vietnam from 1999 to 2018 Unit: %

	1999	2009	2011	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Proportion of population under 15 years old	33,1	24,5	24,0	23,5	24,0	23,8	23,7	23,8
Proportion of population aged 15-64 years	61,1	69,1	69,0	69,4	68,4	68,2	68,0	67,4
Proportion of population aged 60 and over	8,0	8,7	9,9	10,2	11,3	11,9	12,7	13,5
Proportion of population aged 65 and over	5,8	6,4	7,0	7,1	7,6	8,0	8,3	8,9
Aging index	24,3	35,5	41,1	43,3	47,1	50,1	53,4	56,9

Source: General Statistics Office (2020)

In 2017, Vietnam's population was about 94 million people (Table 5). After 25 years of implementing the Resolution of the Fourth Conference of the 7th Central Executive Committee and the Party's policies and policies, the laws of the State, population, and family planning work have achieved many results. Results are essential, significantly contributing to the construction and socio-economic development of the country. However, there are still many limitations in population and family planning work, such as: There are significant differences in fertility among regions; Sex imbalance at birth has increased rapidly, already at a severe level; There are no comprehensive solutions to promote the advantages of the golden population period and adapt to population aging. One of the reasons leading to the above situation is that the staff's awareness and actions working on population work are still heavy on family planning, not paying attention to structure, distribution, and quality population and development. Therefore, Resolution 21-NQ / TW of 2017 on population work in the new situation issued by the Central Committee has emphasized shifting the focus of population policy from family planning to population and development. This

is a significant turning point in the population policy of Vietnam in the new period. This shift of focus aims to "comprehensively address population issues in terms of size, structure, distribution and quality improvement". Conclusion 119-KL / TW also specifies the contents including: Maintaining replacement fertility; Minimize sex imbalance at birth; Take advantage of the golden population structure; Adapting to population aging; Adjust the reasonable population distribution; Improve the quality of the population.

As such, the focus of population policy will be on addressing population and development relationships, not just family planning. For example, in the past, the population-family planning policy focused on family planning to reduce births. Still, now the population policy with the above 6 issues is much broader. "Maintaining replacement fertility" or ensuring that each couple has an average of only about 2.1 children, that is, it is necessary to implement family planning. Therefore, the "shifting of the population policy focus from family planning to population and development" is essentially an extension of the population policy - family planning.

Table 5: Size and Rate of Population Growth in the Period 2011-2019

	Total	Male	Female	Urban	Rural
Total (Thousand of people)					
2011	88.145,80	43.619,20	44.526,60	27.678,60	60.467,20
2012	89.202,90	44.168,00	45.034,90	28.274,90	60.928,00
2013	90.191,40	44.685,80	45.505,60	28.865,10	61.326,30
2014	91.203,80	45.212,80	45.991,00	30.272,70	60.931,10
2015	92.228,60	45.753,80	46.474,80	30.881,90	61.346,70
2016	93.250,70	46.294,70	46.956,00	31.397,00	61.853,70
2017	94.286,00	46.848,00	47.438,00	31.928,30	62.357,70
2018	95.385,20	47.427,10	47.958,10	32.636,90	62.748,30
2019	96.484,00	48.017,70	48.466,30	33.816,60	62.667,40
Increase rate -%					
2011	1,24	1,29	1,19	4,60	-0,23
2012	1,20	1,26	1,14	2,15	0,76
2013	1,11	1,17	1,05	2,09	0,65
2014	1,12	1,18	1,07	4,88	-0,64
2015	1,12	1,20	1,05	2,01	0,68
2016	1,11	1,18	1,04	1,67	0,83
2017	1,11	1,20	1,03	1,69	0,81
2018	1,17	1,24	1,10	2,22	0,63
2019	1,15	1,25	1,06	3,61	-0,13

Source: General Statistics Office (2020)

Discussion and conclusion

Family planning in Vietnam has come a long way and has achieved great achievements. In the past, the population-family planning policy focused on only one content: family planning to reduce births, now the new population policy has shifted to population and development. This is a major turning point of Vietnam's population policy in a new period with more content and a broader scope. Here it should be noted, we are shifting the focus rather than "abandoning family planning". Therefore, in the coming time, it is necessary to focus on the following issues:

First, shifting the focus to absolute population and development is not about "abandoning family planning", but family planning is carried out in the direction of adequate socialization. The point is to organize family planning in a new way. Reality shows that, due to uneven socio-economic conditions, implementing the population-family planning policy is also very different.

According to the new requirement, the fertility target must be differentiated according to each locality. Resolution No. 21-NQ / TW stated: "Birth reduction in provinces and cities with high fertility; maintain the results achieved in the provinces and cities achieving replacement fertility; The practice that each couple should have 2 children in low fertility Areas" is very reasonable. From the above conclusions, the communication and mode of providing means and services between localities also require different arrangements.

Second, integrate population activities into development planning. Resolution No. 21-NQ / TW stated: "Party committees and authorities at all levels should continue to bring population and development work into a central content in regular work and activities; to include population and development targets and targets in resolutions on strategies, master plans, plans and socio-economic development programs". That is, in all development

planning, it is necessary to forecast and take into account the population structure, first of all, the planning of labor and employment to take advantage of the system of "golden population"; planning education and training, as well as health, should take into account the rapidly changing population structure by age; the movement of migration and urbanization; Social security policies need to take into account population aging.

Third, promote communication, education, mobilization on population and development, work for all walks of life, especially the party committees and authorities at all levels, especially for the decision-makers. The policy is increasingly properly and fully aware of the "shifting focus from the population - family planning to population and development". Since then, step by step reform of thinking about population policy, especially family planning, has been deeply rooted in every Vietnamese family. Diversification of communication channels, transmitting messages suitable for each target group is an urgent requirement. This is also the policy emphasized in Resolution No. 21-NQ/TW of the Central Executive Committee: "Strengthening communication, education, population mobilization, and development", which is one of the awards key measures, need to be one step ahead.

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