

# *Russian society, state & everyday life*

*Commentary with focus on demographic challenges*



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# Mortality

## *A shrinking population*

- life expectancy at birth: men 59, women 73 years
- since 1992 mortality exceeds fertility
- population loss of 0.5 % / year
- 2008 141 millions, estimation 2025:  
125-135 millions

## *Social and life style reasons behind growing mortality, not economic transition*

- increase in working class mortality began in the 1970s!

Andreev et al (2009)

## *Paradox*

- improved health care and “middle class” health lifestyles will worsen the challenges of the “third transition” from “red to gray”

Cockerham 2007; The World Bank 2009



# Migration

## *Only solution to demographic crisis?*

- net migration declining since peak in 1990s*
- estimated need 1 million immigrants yearly (3-5 times current inflow)*

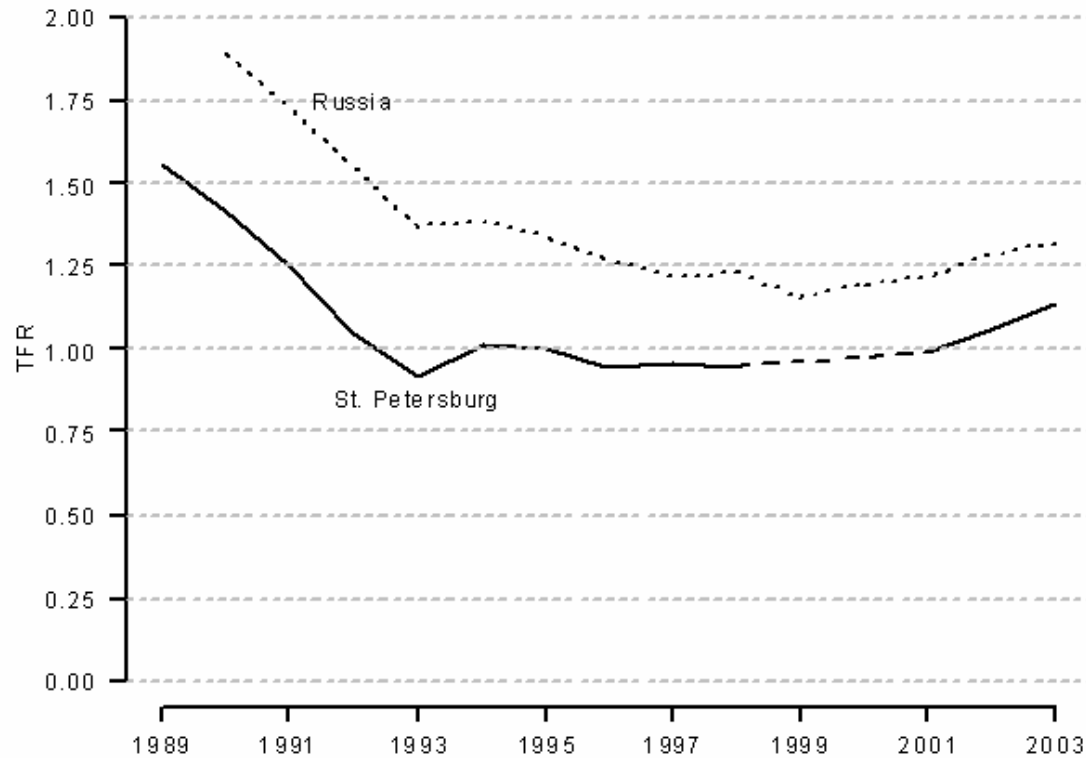
## *Present policies counterproductive*

- migration restricted and subject to political and racist policies*
- lack of data and problems of illegal migrants*
- housing and social policy shortages*

*e.g. Andrienko & Gurev 2007*



# Fertility



Total fertility rates in Russia and St Petersburg 1989-2003.

Anna Rotkirch & Katja Kesseli (2008)

# Fertility policies



*“What is most important for our country? ... I want to talk about love, women, children. I want to talk about the family, about the most acute problem facing our country today – the demographic problem.”*

*V.V.Putin, May 2006*

State advocates monetary and pragmatic support, combined with revived Soviet rhetoric on state support for working mothers

– *“Materinskii kapital” = when second or higher parity child turns 3 years, 250 000 rubles for investing in e.g. housing of education.*

“Who helps the degraded housewife? Comments on Vladimir Putin’s Demographic Speech.” A.Rotkirch, E.Zdravomyslova & A.Temkina, *European J of Women’s Studies* 2007

# A Russian “finding”

## *Preserved tradition of early marriage and first birth*

Also women with higher education become mothers early!

Ideal age to become a parent 22-23 years in Petersburg, 25-26 in Finland.

## *Less childless women*

In Petersburg less than 10 % childless of 30-34 year old women, in Finland over 25 %.

REFER-research consortium survey 2004, reported in Kesseli et al. 2005.

