

Process of demographic transition and possible use of demographic dividend in selected countries of the MENA region

Abstract

The aim of this work is to evaluate the course of demographic transition in the MENA region, mainly in two selected countries – Iran and Iraq. The course of this demographic transition is evaluated based on the analysis of fertility and mortality. Another aim is to evaluate the possible use of the demographic dividend that may occur in these countries. This is mainly to evaluate the key factors which affect the demographic dividend. First, we analyze the development of the age structure which is crucial for defining the beginning and the length of the period of the demographic dividend. Then comes the analysis of other factors such as health, education and employment of the population. These factors determine whether a country is able to effectively exploit the potential of the demographic dividend. It is obvious that not only the favorable age structure but also properly directed government policy is necessary for the period of demographic dividend. In conclusion we summarize the findings of analysis by which we determine at which stages of demographic transition Iran and Iraq are located. In addition, we approximately define the period of the demographic dividend in these two countries and evaluate how much they are able to take an advantage of its potential.

Keywords: demographic transition, demographic dividend, economic growth, the age structure, MENA region, Iran, Iraq