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Demographic situation in France in the late 20th and early 21st century. Analysis of selected phenomena¹

Sytuacja demograficzna Francji na przełomie XX i XXI wieku – analiza wybranych zagadnień

Streszczenie

Przedmiotem rozważań w artykule jest potencjał demograficzny Francji na przełomie wieków XX i XXI. Odpowiedź na pytanie badawcze o sytuację demograficzną tego państwa zawiera się w pogłębionym opisie, analizie i ocenie jego zasobów demograficznych w latach 1991–2013, głównie w odniesieniu do części metropolitarnej. Z uwagi na szeroki i złożony zakres przedmiotowej problematyki, w artykule ograniczono się do analizy wybranych aspektów sytuacji demograficznej Francji, uznanych za szczególnie ważne i interesujące. W konsekwencji opracowanie składa się z trzech zasadniczych części, w których kolejno omówiono: bilans ludności i zmiany w strukturze demograficznej mieszkańców państwa, ruch naturalny ludności (urodzenia i płodność oraz umieralność, z wyłączeniem kwestii małżeństw i rozwodów) oraz migracje zagraniczne, z naciskiem na imigrację do Francji.

Podsumowując, sytuacja demograficzna Francji jest relatywnie korzystna w porównaniu do innych państw europejskich (m.in. rosnąca ogólna liczba ludności, drugie miejsce w UE pod względem zaludnienia, dodatnie saldo naturalne i saldo migracji, zbliżanie się do granicy prostej zastępowalności pokoleń). Proces starzenia się społeczeństwa jest głównym wyzwaniem demograficznym, we Francji postępuje jednak relatywnie wolniej niż w innych państwach Europy. Z uwagi na swoją sytuację demograficzną Francja realnie wpływa na kształt polityki europejskiej, m.in. w zakresie migracji zagranicznych.

¹ The structure adopted for the present article has resulted from collecting, comparing and analysing various academic publications on demography and general statistics in France and Poland. Materials gathered in preparation for the 2nd Demographic Congress in Poland in 2012, originating from the archives of the Government Population Council (RRL), constitute an important source of information in Polish, cf. 2nd Demographic Congress 2012, Central Statistical Office, http://www.stat.gov.pl/gus/kongres_demograficzny_PLK_HTML.htm, access 10.04.2014.

Słowa kluczowe: Francja, Francja metropolitarna, sytuacja demograficzna Francji, potencjał demograficzny Francji, współczynnik dzietności teoretycznej, imigracja, rodność, płodność, umieralność

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Abstract

This paper discusses the demographic potential of France in the late 20th and early 21st century. The research question concerning its demographic situation is answered through the in-depth description, analysis and assessment of the country's demographic resources in the period between 1991 and 2013, with respect to France excluding Mayotte or to metropolitan France. Due to the extensive and complex nature of the subject matter, the aspects of the demographic situation in France analysed in this paper have been chosen based on their relevance. Therefore, the paper consists of three main parts: population statistics and fluctuations in country's demographic structure, vital statistics (natality, fertility and mortality, excluding the question of marriages and divorces), as well as international migrations with a strong focus on the immigration to France.

To sum up, the demographic situation in France is relatively optimistic when compared to other European countries (as exemplified by the rising total population figure, being the second most populated state in the EU, having positive natural increase rate and migration rate, approaching the threshold of generation renewal). The ageing of the population is one of the major demographic challenges for France; yet it is progressing at a slower pace than in the rest of Europe. Given its demographic situation, France actively seeks to define Europe-wide policy, for instance with respect to regulating international migrations.

Key words: France, metropolitan France, demographic situation in France, demographic potential of France, total fertility rate, immigration, natality, fertility and mortality

France may serve as an example of a state where the demographic development model does not meet the criteria of the traditional **first demographic transition**. Mortality and fertility plummeted more or less simultaneously, considerably limiting population growth from the second half of the 18th century. In France, this tendency could be observed at least fifty years before anywhere else in Europe. It was the first country to pass through demographic transition. This extraordinary demographic

evolution between the 18th and the 20th century can be attributed to three trends, namely the relatively slow population growth, constant yet slow decline in mortality and particularly early drop in the number of births. This unusual model of demographic transition affected other areas of the society's life and the country's politics. Furthermore, in the early 21st century it seems that France has managed to avert entering the **second demographic transition**, the model which is to explain the latest demographic processes observed in industrialised countries. This model refers to a situation where the natality is at such a low level that it does not guarantee generational replacement, the mortality continues to fall, particularly at an older age, and natural increase is negative.

At the beginning of 2014, France had a population of approximately 66 million and it was the natural increase rather than net migration that justified population growth in comparison to 2013. Moreover, it is the second most populated state in the EU after Germany. In France, as in other Western European states, the society is ageing. This is due to higher life expectancy for both men and women. At the same time, generation replacement is at the point of being ensured due to relatively high fertility rates.

This paper focuses on the **demographic potential of France** in the late 20th and early 21st century. The research question concerning its demographic situation is answered through the in-depth description, analysis and assessment of the country's demographic resources in the period between 1991 and 2013², with respect to France excluding Mayotte or to metropolitan France. Due to the extensive and complex nature of the subject matter, the aspects of the demographic situation in France analysed in this paper have been chosen based on their relevance. Therefore, the paper consists of three main parts: population statistics and fluctuations in country's demographic structure, vital statistics (natality, fertility and mortality, excluding the question of marriages and divorces), as well as international migrations with a strong focus on the immigration to France.

In this paper, the analysis of selected demographic phenomena is primarily of statistical nature. The statistical data used and discussed have been derived mainly from French public statistical sources such as the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE)³, open data public platforms⁴ as well as websites of the relevant ministries. They also come from reports and academic studies which refer

² The analysis does not always cover exactly these years; it may refer to a shorter period of time or to selected years. Sometimes statistical data for 2014 are presented.

³ Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques (INSEE), <http://insee.fr/fr/>, access 10.04.2014.

⁴ Plateforme ouverte des données publiques françaises, www.data.gouv.fr, access 10.04.2014.

back to governmental sources or stand alone as a reliable source of information as they are supported by extensive research. Furthermore, in the paper the French approach is compared with the methodology, methods and tools used in the Polish public statistics by the Central Statistical Office (GUS)⁵ and the Government Population Council (RRL)⁶.

Population statistics

Population statistics are a good starting point for the analysis of the current demographic landscape of a given country. By population statistics in a given year we understand a synthetic presentation of results obtained from two intertwined demographic factors: a) vital statistics and b) migratory movements. The first parameter covers the number of live births and the number of deaths as well as their implications for the natural population growth. The second one informs about the population inflows and outflows and the resultant migration balance. Absolute figures concerning population growth (or decline) and migration growth (or decline) have a decisive effect on the pace of total population growth (or decline) in a given year. It should also be noted that births, deaths and migrations are not only crucial in terms of determining growth, stabilisation or decline in the number of inhabitants, but also shape the country's sex and age landscape⁷.

In France the statistical data on its population can apply to the geographical territory defined in three different ways. The most natural and fundamental is the metropolitan France (*France métropolitaine* or *la Métropole*), which includes 96 European departments on the continent as well as the island of Corsica in the Mediterranean. Nonetheless, French statistical records also refer to "the whole France" (*France entière*), encompassing the metropolitan France and the overseas departments: Guadeloupe, Martinique, French Guiana, Réunion Island and as of April 2011 also Mayotte⁸. All of them combined constitute a country of 101 departments, 96 of which are European and 5 overseas departments. France within that meaning is a member of the EU. In the end, the overall data quoted for France apply to the aforementioned

⁵ Główny Urząd Statystyczny (GUS), <http://stat.gov.pl/>, access 10.04.2014.

⁶ Rządowa Rada Ludnościowa (RRL), <http://bip.stat.gov.pl/organizacja-statystyki-publicznej/rzadowa-rada-ludnosciowa/>, access 10.04.2014.

⁷ Rządowa Rada Ludnościowa, *Sytuacja demograficzna Polski: raport 2010–2011*, Warszawa 2011, p. 21, http://www.stat.gov.pl/cps/rde/xbcr/bip/BIP_raport_2010–2011.pdf, access 10.04.2014.

⁸ In the specialist literature and daily newspapers another term is often used – *la France d'outre-mer* (overseas France), which refers to all the French overseas territories with very different status, including not only 5 overseas departments.

“whole” France, extended to incorporate the remaining overseas territories which hold a different status than the overseas departments. Those territories include New Caledonia, French Polynesia, Wallis and Futuna, French Southern and Antarctic Lands, Scattered Islands in the Indian Ocean and the territorial collectivity of Saint-Pierre-and-Miquelon with a special status⁹.

According to provisional data published by INSEE, on January 1, 2014 the population of France (Table 1) stood at 65.8 million inhabitants; with 63.9 million in the metropolitan France and 1.9 million in overseas departments, excluding Mayotte¹⁰. Moreover, the youngest overseas department was home to 0.2 million people. The total number of inhabitants in the entire country excluding Mayotte increased by 0.4% in 2013, which corresponds to 280,000 new inhabitants. The recorded figure is the lowest since 2000. Similarly, the natural increase in 2013 (+238,000) was the lowest result recorded since 2003 as a consequence of fewer live births and a steadily increasing number of deaths. Finally, one could observe relatively weak net migration rate (+40,000)¹¹. In the past 30 years, the population of France increased by nearly 9.7 million inhabitants, with a rise of 17.2%.

In 2013 (as at January 1) the population of France accounted for 13.1% of the total population of the EU – 27, which made it the second most populated member state. Germany with 16.1% was ranked first, while the UK (12.7%) and Italy (11.9%) – third and fourth, respectively¹². The demographic dynamics of France in recent years have largely been determined by a high number of births and a low number of deaths. They were to a lesser extent explained by the migration balance.

Table 1 provides a detailed overview of the factors contributing to the population development in France excluding Mayotte and the metropolitan France, respectively. The figures presented therein offer insight into the impact the overseas territories have on the demographic transformation in the whole country in number terms.

⁹ INSEE, *Definition of „France”*, <http://www.insee.fr/fr/methodes/default.asp?page=definitions/france.htm>, access 10.04.2014.

¹⁰ Mayotte became a 5th overseas department on March 31st 2011. Before that date it was an overseas collectivity.

¹¹ V. Bellamy, C. Beaumel, *Bilan démographique 2013: Trois mariages pour deux Pacs*, „Insee Première” 2014, no. 1482, http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/document.asp?reg_id=0&ref_id=IP1482, access 10.04.2014.

¹² Ibidem.

Table 1. Population statistics in France excluding Mayotte* (F) and in metropolitan France (MF) in 2000–2014

Year	Population on January 1st		Births		Deaths		Natural increase		Net migration		Adjustment	
	F	MF	F	MF	F	MF	F	MF	F	MF	F	MF
2000	60,508,150	58,858,198	807,405	774,782	540,601	530,864	+266,804	+243,918	+72,000	+70,000	+94,456	+94,456
2001	60,941,410	59,266,572	803,234	770,945	541,029	531,073	+262,205	+239,872	+87,000	+85,000	+94,455	+94,455
2002	61,385,070	59,685,899	792,745	761,630	545,241	535,144	+247,504	+226,486	+97,000	+95,000	+94,456	+94,456
2003	61,824,030	60,101,841	793,044	761,464	562,467	552,339	+230,577	+209,125	+102,000	+100,000	+94,455	+94,455
2004	62,251,062	60,505,421	799,361	767,816	519,470	509,429	+279,891	+258,387	+105,128	+105,000	+94,456	+94,456
2005	62,730,537	60,963,284	806,822	774,355	538,081	527,533	+268,741	+246,822	+92,192	+95,000	+94,647	+94,647
2006	63,186,117	61,399,733	829,352	796,896	526,920	516,416	+302,432	+280,480	+112,141	+115,025	0	0
2007	63,600,690	61,795,238	818,705	785,985	531,162	521,016	+287,543	+264,969	+73,626	+74,659	0	0
2008	63,961,859	62,134,866	828,404	796,044	542,575	532,131	+285,829	+263,913	+56,812	+66,930	0	0
2009	64,304,500	62,465,709	824,641	793,420	548,541	538,116	+276,100	+255,304	+32,339	+44,222	0	0
2010	64,612,939	62,765,235	832,799	802,224	551,218	540,469	+281,581	+261,755	+38,880	+43,354	0	0
2011 (p)	64,933,400	63,070,344	823,394	792,996	545,057	534,795	+278,337	+258,201	+40,000	+50,000	0	0
2012 (p)	65,251,737	63,378,545	821,047	790,290	569,868	559,227	+251,179	+231,063	+40,000	+50,000	0	0
2013 (p)	65,542,916	63,659,608	810,000	780,000	572,000	561,000	+238,000	+219,000	+40,000	+50,000	0	0
2014 (p)	65,820,916	63,928,608	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na

* The aggregated data for "the whole France" (F) published by INSEE after March 2011 do not include Mayotte, which became the 5th overseas department. Including Mayotte would require too many calculations for existing data and adjustment of statistical data. INSEE resigned from such a solution. This is justified, because the demographic importance of this overseas territory for the whole country is small. Detailed data regarding Mayotte, cf. Mayotte, INSEE, <http://www.insee.fr/fr/regions/mayotte/> (10.04.2014). Data for Mayotte will be gradually integrated with the data for "overseas" France in the coming years by INSEE.

(p) – provisional data, na – not available

Source: INSEE, *Population changes*, http://www.insee.fr/en/themes/detail.asp?reg_id=0&ref_id=bilan-demo&page=donnees-detaillees/bilan-demo/pop_age3.htm, access 10.04.2014.

Figure 1 shows the tendencies in vital statistics for the population in metropolitan France in a historical perspective from 1920 to 2013. The striped area indicates the scale of natural increase/decrease over the span of nearly a century. Until 1928 the birth rate continued to exceed the mortality rate; in the following year a one-off drop was noted, with the birth rate reaching 17.7‰ in comparison to the mortality rate which stood at 17.9‰. It was only 1935 that saw the beginning of a period of few years where the population in France began decreasing steadily. The mortality rate remained higher than the birth rate until 1944. In the final year of World War II the trend receded and 1946 saw a surge in the birth rate from 16.2‰ to 20.9‰, while the mortality rate dropped from 16.1‰ to 13.5‰. Throughout the period between 1946 and 2013 the number of births considerably exceeded the number of deaths. The scale of natural increase was at its highest up to 1974 (the so called *baby boom*), when the rate remained above 15‰. The long-term birth trend per 1,000 people was downwards initially, especially from 1948, but it remained relatively stable at 12–13‰ rate from mid-1990s to 2000s. With respect to the number of deaths per 1,000 inhabitants, an earlier long-term downward trend is noticeable. From the 1990s it fluctuates between 8‰ and 10‰, whereas in the 2000s it decreases in comparison to the previous decade.

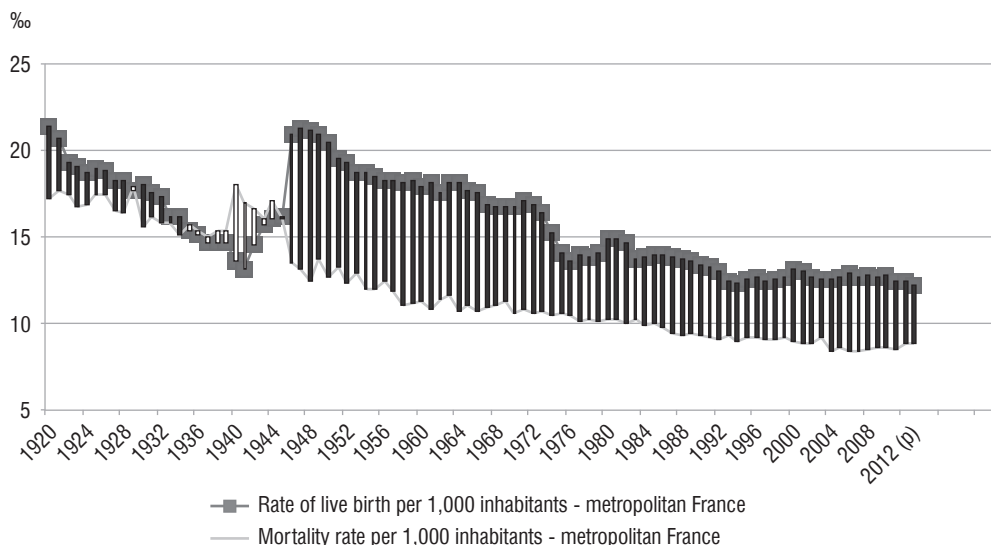


Figure 1. Vital statistics for metropolitan France (per 1,000 inhabitants) since 1920

(p) – provisional data; striped area – natural increase/decrease of population

Source: own work based on INSEE, *Banque de données macro-économiques (BDM)*, <http://www.bdm.insee.fr/>, access 10.04.2014.

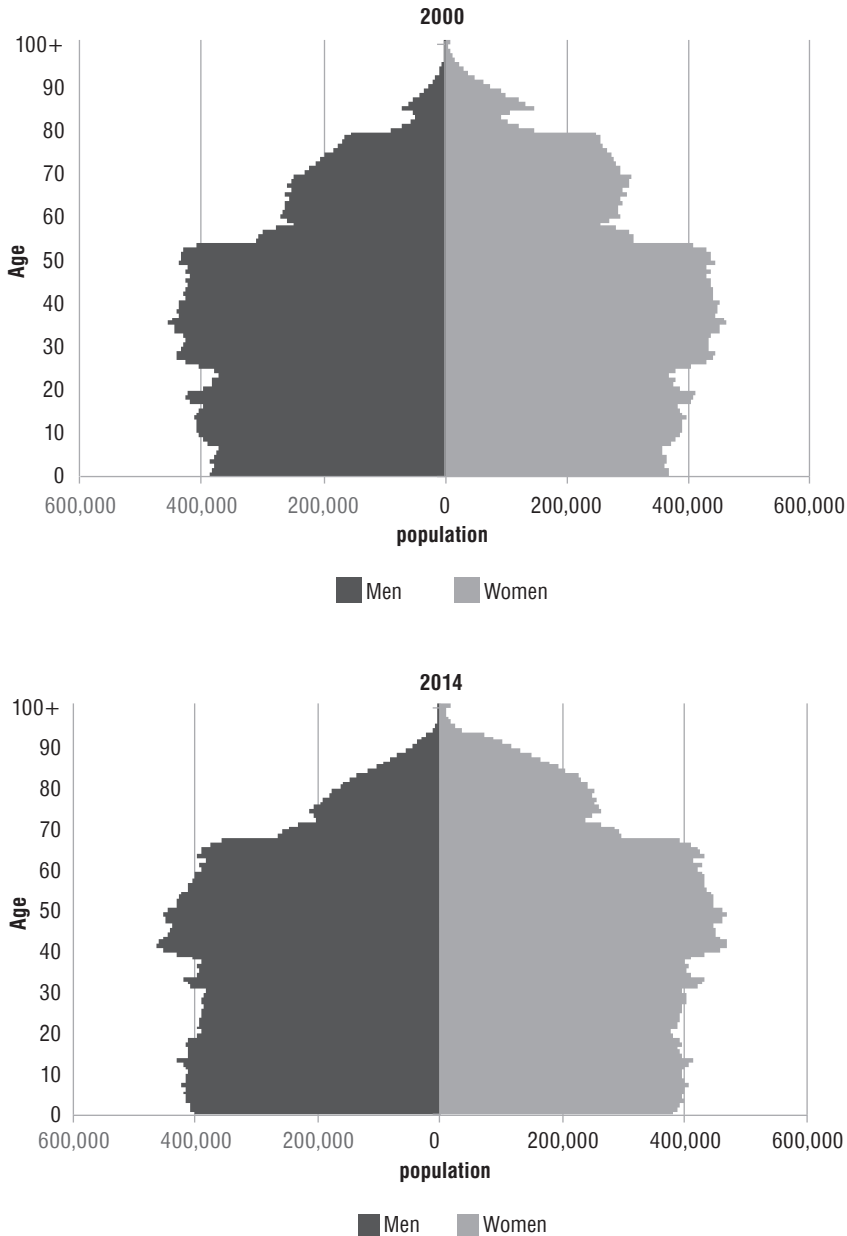


Figure 2. Structure of the population in France (excluding Mayotte) by sex and age in 2000 and 2014 (as on January 1st)

Source: own work based on INSEE, *Pyramide des âges au 1er janvier 2014*, http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/tableau.asp?ref_id=ccc; INSEE, *Pyramide des âges*, <http://www.insee.fr/fr/ppp/bases-de-donnees/donnees-detaillees/bilan-demo/pyramide/pyramide.htm?champ=fe&lang=fr&annee=2000>, access 10.04.2014.

Fluctuations in population figures are most visible when the structure of the French population is broken down by two fundamental socio-demographic factors: sex and age. Figure 2 comprises population pyramids for the whole of France, excluding Mayotte, in 2000 and 2014 (as at January 1).

As can be seen, at the turn of the 20th and 21st century people aged between 26 and 52 years dominated both female and male populations; for each of those ages over 420,000 people were recorded for each of the sexes separately. The pyramid was relatively symmetrical; yet an overrepresentation of men aged between 0 and 24 could be observed. The 25th year of life, with 487 more females than males, emerges as the age when the population of women in France starts to exceed the population of men. At the age of 51, the number of individuals belonging to each of the two groups is nearly equal, while increasingly noticeable domination of women is recorded after the age of 60. The graphical representation of population structure in France is not a perfect age pyramid, nonetheless the way it is distributed between different age groups, taking sex into consideration, can be perceived as favourable. In 2014, the 2000's most populous generation, which includes 26–52-year-olds, shifted towards the top of the pyramid. Today, people aged 41, born in 1972, form the largest group in both female and male population. There are 470 121 women and 464 053 men at this age. It is worth stressing that at the beginning of the second decade of 2000s the base of the pyramid broadened considerably, which means that the new generations are more and more populous in terms of men and women alike. In addition, the widening of the top of the pyramid for people over 70 reflects the inevitable aging of the French population.

It is useful to look at the population numbers of a country from a chronological perspective and to break them down by biological and economic age. The population of France excluding Mayotte **by biological age** between 1991 and 2014 in figures and percentages is presented in Table 2¹³. Throughout the period under consideration it was the 15–64 age group that was the most numerous. The total number of people in this group rose continuously starting from 38.3 million in 1991, reaching 39.6 million a decade later and exceeding 42 million in 2011. In relative terms, however, the percentage representing this age group's share in the whole population reflects a downward trend with periods of stagnation and increase. In 1991, the corresponding percentage stood at 65.7%, in 2001 at 65% and in 2011 it dropped to 64.7%. Calculations show that between 1991 and 2011 all the biological age groups recorded an

¹³ The table contains data only for selected years. The complete data for each year, cf. INSEE, *Population change and structure, France except Mayotte*, http://www.insee.fr/en/themes/detail.asp?reg_id=0&ref_id=bilan-demo&page=donnees-detaillees/bilan-demo/pop_age³.htm, access 10.04.2014.

increase. The highest growth in numbers was observed for people aged 15–64 years – 3.7 million in absolute terms; it corresponds to 9.6%. In relative terms, almost three and a half times higher increase (33.5%) was recorded for people aged 65 years and over. This represents an increase of 2.7 million people. In the analysed period of time, the group aged 0–14 grew by nearly 0.3 million individuals, producing a weak positive change of 2.1%. According to provisional data published by INSEE, in 2014 there were 18.5% of children, 63.5% of people aged 15–64 years and 18.0% of those aged 65 years and over.

Table 2. Population change and structure by biological age groups in 1991–2014 in France (excluding Mayotte)

Year	0–14 years	15–64 years	65 years and over	0–14 years	15–64 years	65 years and over
	in numbers, population on January 1 st			in percentages (%)		
1991	11,808,904	38,330,600	8,140,631	20.3	65.7	14.0
2001	11,613,651	39,620,412	9,707,347	19.1	65.0	15.9
2011	12,060,943	42,003,496	10,868,961	18.6	64.7	16.7
2012 (p)	12,110,407	41,953,054	11,188,276	18.6	64.3	17.1
2013 (p)	12,164,564	41,864,020	11,514,332	18.6	63.8	17.6
2014 (p)	12,193,722	41,778,851	11,848,343	18.5	63.5	18.0
(p) – provisional data						

Source: own calculation and work based on INSEE, *Population change and structure, France except Mayotte*, http://www.insee.fr/en/themes/detail.asp?reg_id=0&ref_id=bilan-demo&page=donnees-detaillees/bilan-demo/pop_age3.htm, access 10.04.2014.

Using thus determined three biological age groups, it can be noticed that the trends determined based on the percentages in the extreme groups of the population, namely 0–14 as well as 65+, coincide in time. The share of the youngest population in the total population of France showed a gradual but moderate decrease between 1991 and 2006, reaching 18.5%. Over the recent years it has remained stable at 18.6%, edging down slightly in 2014 to 18.5%. Simultaneously, the percentage of people aged 65 or more rose from 14% in 1991 to 16.4% in 2006. In the following year, this share declined very slightly and a moderate upward trend continued afterwards until it reached 18.0% in 2014. In 1991 the difference between the share of both age groups was 6.3 percentage points; in 2014 it plummeted to 0.5 percentage points.

When analysing a demographic landscape, an important aspect to bear in mind is the selection of age groups. Given the constantly improving health conditions in societies of highly developed countries, including France, as well as the higher average life expectancy, it seems reasonable to focus on the group defined as the

oldest. Consequently, the question arises as to when old age begins. A different age limit is used both on a country level and by individual research centres. At this stage of our analysis, the age of 65 was determined as the **point when biological old age begins**. In France, more comprehensive statistics on the population structure by age groups also tend to show data for individuals at the age of 75 years and over¹⁴. On the other hand, in Polish public statistics, a group of elderly people of 80 years and over is often mentioned¹⁵. In 1991 in France except Mayotte, the percentage of people aged 65–74 out of the total population exceeded the share of people aged 75 or more (7.4% against 6.6%). The percentages evened out in 2006 when they reached the 8.2% threshold for both age groups. In 2014, elderly people (meaning here individuals 75 years old or more) slightly outnumbered the 65–74 age group (9.1% against 8.9%)¹⁶.

Median age is used to assess the level of ageing in a population. Its surge means that the society is ageing, whereas its drop implies rejuvenation. In France except Mayotte, in the period between 1991 and 2014, the median age for each of the three groups under consideration (total population, female and male population) rose continuously; the median age for women was the highest, while for men it was even lower than for the population overall. The figure of 41.1 years for women in 2014 implies that 50% of women in the population were aged 41.1 years or over. For instance, in 1994, the figure was 35.9, which means that 20 years earlier 50% of women in France were at least 35.9 years old. The corresponding figures for men were 38.3 in 2014 and 33.2 in 1994. Another useful measure in this context is **mean (average) age of the population**. Similarly to median age, the highest results in the period between 1991 and 2014 were recorded for women and the lowest for men. In the period under consideration, the average age for women increased by 3.8 years to 42.1 in 2014, while for men it grew by 4 years to 39.3. Generally speaking, the results for the mean age in each of three populations analysed were higher than the corresponding results for the median age. To sum up, the average age for the total population grew from 36.9 in 1991 to 40.8 in 2014, while the median age increased from 33.7 in 1991 to 39.8 in 2014¹⁷.

Breaking down the population by **economic age** provides information about the number of people at a working age, which is a crucial age group from the point of view of a country's economy, since it allows us to estimate the size of the potential

¹⁴ Cf. Studies and data published by INSEE.

¹⁵ Cf. Studies and data published by GUS and RRL.

¹⁶ Author's calculations based on *Évolution de la structure de la population, France hors Mayotte*, http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/detail.asp?reg_id=0&ref_id=bilan-demo&page=donnees-detaillees/bilan-demo/pop_age3.htm, access 10.04.2014.

¹⁷ Cf. INSEE, *Évolution de l'âge moyen et de l'âge médian de la population jusqu'en 2014*, http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/tableau.asp?ref_id=NATnon02147, access 10.04.2014.

workforce. These data are critical for determining the supply and demand on the labour market and analysing the age dependency ratio, which in recent years has tended to rise in countries where the ageing of the population advances. Thus obtained statistical data needs to be compared against the information on the number of people who are economically active (both working and unemployed) and passive in the society so that the final demographic landscape is complete.

French statistical sources when referring to the population structure broken down by age usually use the term “grandes classes d’âge”, which can be translated as “general age classes”. These are as follows: 0–19 years, 20–59 years, 60 years and over¹⁸; the retirement age in France (excluding special professional groups), which is 62, is the same for men and women. The French nomenclature has been using the age group of under 20, i.e. the 0–19 category, to refer to young people for a number of years, but it still remains hesitant with regard to determining the elderly age point (60 or 65). In time series for the 1901–2010 period as well as in the case of long-term forecasts for France (spanning the period of time until 2050), INSEE uses the cut-off point of 60 years. In the context of short-term and regular studies INSEE rather idiosyncratically uses four age groups: 0–19, 20–59, 60–64 and 65 or more. Moreover, INSEE also distinguishes a category of elderly people (the most senior) for individuals aged 75 or more¹⁹.

This section of the paper presents the distribution of **economic age groups** (relating to the ability to work) in the population of France in accordance with the three traditional ranges (Table 3²⁰). In the period of time in question, i.e. 1991–2014, it was the 20–59 age group that prevailed in number terms. Depending on a year, it accounted for 51% up to 54% of the total population. Initially, the percentage share remained stable, however as of 2004 it began declining slightly from 54.1% to 51.2% in 2014. At the same time, between 1991 and 2014, the share of people at pre-working age dropped from 27.7% to 24.6%, which means that a less numerous fraction of the population will enter the labour market in the coming years. On the other hand, the share of individuals at retirement age in total French population rose from 19.1% in the 1990s to 24.2% at present. In order to grasp the scale of this tendency it is useful to convert percentages to specific numbers. In 1991, there were 16.2 million people

¹⁸ Cf. Data, studies and publications by INSEE, <http://www.insee.fr/>. French demographers and other researchers dealing with demographic issues also refer to these age groups, for instance: D. Noin, Y. Chauviré, *La population de la France*, Armand Colin, Paris 2005; *Populations et territoires de France en 2030: le scénario d'un futur choisi*, ed. G.-F. Dumont, L'Harmattan, Paris 2008.

¹⁹ J.-M. Robine, *La situation démographique de la France: état des lieux et perspectives*, in: *Retraites, démographie, santé... Vieillir en France aujourd'hui et demain*, ed. E. Le Bourg, Vuibert, Paris 2010, p. 26–27.

²⁰ The table contains data only for selected years. The complete data for each year, cf. *Population change and structure, France except Mayotte*, op.cit.

in the 0–19 age group; the number dropped to 15.7 million in 2001 but it climbed up to 16.2 million again in 2014. In the same period, in the 20–59 group there were 31 million, 32.9 million and 33.7 million people, respectively. Finally, the figures for the 60+ age group reached 11.1 million in 1991, 12.4 million a decade later and rose to 15.9 million in 2014.

Table 3. Population of France (excluding Mayotte) by economic age groups in 1991–2014

Year	0–19 years	20–59 years	60 years and over	0–19 years	20–59 years	60 years and over
	in numbers, population on January 1 st			in percentages (%)		
1991	16,162,383	31,017,161	11,100,591	27.7	53.2	19.1
2001	15,651,059	32,850,586	12,439,765	25.7	53.9	20.4
2011	16,038,270	33,920,108	14,975,022	24.7	52.3	23.0
2012 (p)	16,077,771	33,869,419	15,304,547	24.6	52.0	23.4
2013 (p)	16,122,039	33,798,105	15,622,772	24.6	51.5	23.9
2014 (p)	16,190,613	33,712,998	15,917,305	24.6	51.2	24.2
(p) – provisional data						

Source: own calculation and work based on INSEE, *Population change and structure, France except Mayotte*, http://www.insee.fr/en/themes/detail.asp?reg_id=0&ref_id=bilan-demo&page=donnees-detaillees/bilan-demo/pop_age3.htm, access 10.04.2014.

The decrease in the number of people at pre-working age and the increase in the number of those at post-working age affected the scope of **demographic dependency** of French population at working age by people representing the two groups referred to above. The figures for 1991–2014 are presented in Table 4. In the period in question the demographic dependency of the working age group by the pre-working age group dropped from 52.1 to 48; however, the demographic dependency by post-working age group rose considerably from 35.8 to 47.2. In total, the age dependency ratio was 87.9 in 1991 and it grew to 95.2 to 2014. However, if one assumes that the retirement age starts at 65 and not at 60, the adjusted age dependency ratio drops and allows for a more optimistic interpretation. In 1991, instead of 87.9 people at non-working age per 100 individuals at working age we obtain the adjusted value of 78.4 people; in 2014 we obtain 83.2 instead of 95.2.

Table 4. Age dependency ratio in France (excluding Mayotte) in 1991–2014

Year	per 100 working – age population there are "x" population in...			
	pre-working age (0–19 years)	post-working age (60 years and over)	non-working age (0–19 years and 60 years and over)	non-working age (0–19 years and 65 years and over)
1991	52.1	35.8	87.9	78.4
2001	47.6	37.9	85.5	77.2
2011	47.3	44.1	91.4	79.3
2012 (p)	47.5	45.2	92.7	80.5
2013 (p)	47.7	46.2	93.9	81.8
2014 (p)	48.0	47.2	95.2	83.2

Age dependency ratio calculated according to the formula: non-working or pre-working or post-working age population / working-age population * 100
(p) – provisional data

Source: own calculation and work based on INSEE, *Population change and structure, France except Mayotte*, http://www.insee.fr/en/themes/detail.asp?reg_id=0&ref_id=bilan-demo&page=donnees-detaillees/bilan-demo/pop_age3.htm, access 10.04.2014.

Births and fertility

Fertility is a complex demographic phenomenon. The numbers representing live births constitute a fundamental piece of data for analysing reproductive trends in a given population and for determining the demographic renewal potential. Despite certain regularities, the overall number of live births is an imperfect piece of information from the point of view of interpretation and foreseeing the evolution of studied phenomena as it is affected by such factors as²¹:

- 1) the overall size of a population, especially the size of the group of individuals at the reproductive age,
- 2) the structure of a population – the share of people at reproductive age and the relation between the old and young generations,
- 3) the structure of the population at reproductive age,
- 4) reproductive attitudes and behaviours.

It means that when analysing the dynamics of live births, it proves challenging to unambiguously determine the causes of studied trends, which are affected by the factors mentioned. It is the crude birth rate that makes it possible to disregard the impact of the overall population number, whereas the effects of the structure of a population are accentuated by general indices of the effects of structural change, calculated according to standardised fertility rates. Finally, partial fertility rates,

²¹ Rządowa Rada Ludnościowa, op.cit., p. 76.

total fertility rate (TFR) and mean age of mothers at childbirth provide details about reproductive behaviours²².

In statistical studies conducted in Poland fertility is considered in the context of the quantitative approach as a demographic phenomenon taking into account the number of live births and described with metrics where the population of live births is compared to the population at the reproductive age, which generally comprises women aged between 15 and 49 years (macro approach). Couples at reproductive age, meaning the ones in which women are under 50, are analysed in research carried out on a micro scale. In order to measure this demographic phenomenon it is important to bear in mind that changes in reproductive behaviours can be reflected both in fluctuations of fertility levels as well as in the progression of fertility in a population (acceleration, deferral, compensation). Therefore, using different metrics which carry different information is vital in order to obtain a comprehensive picture. Those metrics include, i.a.²³:

- 1) metrics of fertility levels:
 - total fertility rate²⁴,
- 2) distribution of fertility by mother's age (fertility pattern), which is:
 - determined by partial fertility rates by mother's age,
 - calculated using the mean age of mothers at childbirth.

The above-mentioned metrics are applied in Polish research to general public statistics. They are also used in France; their denominations however, or their literal translations into Polish, do not always correspond directly to Polish terminology²⁵.

Table 5²⁶ shows the number of live births and rate of birth per 1,000 people in 1991–2013 for both the metropolitan France and France including the overseas departments. In the latter, the level of live births is higher and birth rates per 1,000

²² Ibidem, p. 78.

²³ Ibidem, p. 98–99.

²⁴ The total (theoretical) fertility rate (TFR) is defined as the sum of fertility rates in consecutive age groups of people who reached the age between 15 and 49 and designates the average number of children which a mother would give birth to during her reproductive age if the fertility pattern in a given calendar year remained constant. Cf. J.Z. Holzer, *Demografia*, PWE, Warszawa 2003, p. 77, 253. According to the INSEE's definition TFR (*indice conjoncturel de fécondité*) measures "the number of children a woman would have in the course of her life if the fertility rates observed at each age in the year in question remained unchanged". Cf. definition of "total fertility rate", INSEE, <http://www.insee.fr/en/methodes/default.asp?page=definitions/indicateur-conjonct-fecondite.htm>, access 10.04.2014.

²⁵ An interesting website in the field of demography available in different languages is Demopaedia – Multilingual Demographic Dictionary, <http://demopaedia.org/>, access 10.04.2014. This international initiative comes from Population Division of United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and from International Union for the Scientific Study of Population.

²⁶ The table contains data only for selected years. The complete data for each year, cf. INSEE, *Banque de données macro-économiques (BDM)*, <http://www.bdm.insee.fr/bdm2/choixCriteres.action?codeGroupe=62>, access 10.04.2014.

people are also higher, although only slightly. This fact brings us to the conclusion that natality as a demographic phenomenon is similar in the metropolitan France and in France as a whole excluding Mayotte. This in turn provides rationale for limiting further demographic analysis to the *Métropole*, especially that the records for the metropolitan France span longer and more detailed times series.

As shown in Table 5, the number of live births in France from the early 1990s persisted on a high level of 740,000 births per annum. In 2000 the figure exceeded 800,000, temporarily dropping below this threshold in 2002–2004. Still, as of 2006 the number of live births has oscillated around 820,000; in 2013 it stood at 810,000 births. At the same time, the birth rate per 1,000 people in the past 22 years has ranged from 12.3 to 13.5.

Table 5. Number of live births and rate of birth per 1,000 people in France (the whole country and the metropolitan territory) in 1991–2013

Year	Live births – France except Mayotte	Rate of birth per 1,000 inhabitants – France except Mayotte	Live births – metropolitan France	Rate of birth per 1,000 inhabitants – metropolitan France
1991	790,078	13.5	759,056	13.3
1995	759,058	12.8	729,609	12.6
2000	807,405	13.3	774,782	13.1
2001	803,234	13.1	770,945	13.0
2002	792,745	12.9	761,630	12.7
2003	793,044	12.8	761,464	12.6
2004	799,361	12.8	767,816	12.6
2005	806,822	12.8	774,355	12.7
2006	829,352	13.1	796,896	12.9
2007	818,705	12.8	785,985	12.7
2008	828,404	12.9	796,044	12.8
2009	824,641	12.8	793,420	12.7
2010	832,799	12.9	802,224	12.8
2011 (p)	823,394	12.6	792,996	12.5
2012 (p)	821,047	12.6	790,290	12.4
2013 (p)	810,000	12.3	780,000	12.2

(p) – provisional data for live births in 2013 for France and metropolitan France; for rate of birth in 2011–2013 for France and metropolitan France

Source: own work based on INSEE, *Banque de données macro-économiques (BDM)*, <http://www.bdm.insee.fr/bdm2/choixCriteres.action?codeGroupe=62>, access 10.04.2014.

Table 6²⁷ features three metrics: partial and total fertility rates as well as mean age of mother at childbirth calculated with the fertility rates for the metropolitan France. The 4.1 rate in 1991 for women aged between 15 and 24 should be interpreted as follows: 100 females aged between 15 and 24, who reached the age from this category in 1991, had the average of 4.1 children.

Table 6. Fertility rates in metropolitan France in 1991–2013

Year	Fertility rate by mother's age (number of births per 100 women)					Total fertility rate (1) (per 100 women)	Mean age (2) (years)
	15–24 years	25–29 years	30–34 years	35–39 years	40–50 years		
1991	4.1	13.8	9.1	3.7	0.4	177.0	28.4
1995	3.3	13.2	10.0	4.0	0.4	171.3	29.0
2000	3.2	13.4	11.6	5.0	0.5	187.4	29.4
2001	3.3	13.2	11.7	5.1	0.5	187.7	29.4
2002	3.2	13.0	11.7	5.1	0.5	186.4	29.5
2003	3.1	12.9	11.9	5.2	0.6	187.4	29.5
2004	3.2	12.9	12.0	5.4	0.6	189.8	29.6
2005	3.1	12.8	12.3	5.6	0.6	192.0	29.7
2006	3.2	13.0	12.7	6.0	0.6	198.0	29.8
2007	3.1	12.8	12.7	6.0	0.7	195.9	29.8
2008	3.2	12.9	13.0	6.2	0.7	199.0	29.9
2009	3.1	12.8	13.1	6.2	0.7	198.9	29.9
2010	3.1	12.9	13.3	6.3	0.7	201.6	30.0
2011 (p)	3.0	12.7	13.2	6.4	0.8	199.7	30.1
2012 (p)	3.0	12.5	13.2	6.6	0.8	199.5	30.1
2013 (p)	2.8	12.3	13.1	6.7	0.8	197.4	30.2
(p) – provisional data							
(1) Sum of fertility rates in a given year							
(2) Mean age of mother at childbirth calculated with the fertility rates							

Source: INSEE, *Fertility*, http://www.insee.fr/en/themes/detail.asp?reg_id=0&ref_id=bilan-demo&page=donnees-detaillees/bilan-demo/pop_age3c.htm, access 10.04.2014.

In the period of time in question, the fertility rate for the youngest category of women at reproductive age (15–24) initially dropped from 4.1 in 1991 to 3 in 1997 and remained on the same level until the end of the 1990s. It then edged up slightly in 2000–2010 and stayed within the 3.1–3.2 range. In 2011–2012, it fell to 3 and

²⁷ The table contains data only for selected years. The complete data for each year, cf. INSEE, *Fertility*, http://www.insee.fr/en/themes/detail.asp?reg_id=0&ref_id=bilan-demo&page=donnees-detaillees/bilan-demo/pop_age3c.htm, access 10.04.2014.

diminished further to 2.8 in 2013. On the other hand, the fertility rate for females aged between 25 and 29 fluctuated moderately from relatively high 13.8 in the early 1990s to below 13 towards the end of the period under investigation. It reached 12.3 in 2013. Within the same timeline, the most considerable increase could be observed for females aged 30–34, which undoubtedly resulted from the rising mean age in which women give birth in France. By the mid-1990s, the fertility rate for the discussed group oscillated around 9. It spiked to 10 in 1995, thus starting an upward trend, which settled within the 13.2–13.3 range in 2010–2012. It dropped slightly to 13.1 in 2013 according to provisional data. The results for females aged between 35 and 39 also increased significantly. In 1991, the fertility rate for this group was 3.7; it reached 4 in 1995, rose to 5 in 2000 and was already at 6.7 in 2012. Within more than two decades the fertility rate in the oldest group of women at reproductive age, namely the 40–50 age group, doubled from 0.4 to 0.8. Nevertheless, it should be noted that while the fertility rate for women aged 25–29 fell, it rose for females aged 30–34. In 1991 the difference in the rate between these two groups reached 4.7 in favour of the younger group, whereas in 2013 the difference came to 0.8 in favour of the older category.

The mean age of mothers at childbirth in the *Métropole* (Table 6) has been seeing a moderate upward trend since 1991. In the early 1990s, females in France gave birth at the age of 28.4 years on average and 29.4 a decade later. The threshold of 30 years of age was surpassed in 2010 and has continued to rise. From these statistics for the French population a conclusion can be drawn that the mean age at which women give birth is constantly increasing; although the detailed analysis of the average age of mothers at childbirth has been overlooked on this occasion²⁸.

Figure 3 shows the evolution of the total fertility rate per 1,000 women in metropolitan France between 1946 and 2013 in relation to the rate perceived as guaranteeing a simple replacement of generations. Considering the adopted timeframe, it is important to note that in 1946–1974 the recorded values satisfied the criterion of direct demographic renewal in the country, as the 2,100 threshold was surpassed. Moreover, between 1947 and 1949, the rate exceeded 3,000 and reached a comparably high level (2,915) once more in 1964. In 1975, straight after the *baby boom*, it fell to 1,927, which was below the mentioned threshold. This means that 1,000 females would give birth to 1,927 children throughout their reproductive age. From that point until 2013 the rate fluctuated within the 1,500–2,100 range, nearing the threshold of a simple replacement of generations in recent years. In 2010 it reached the highest

²⁸ Cf. INSEE, *Fertility*, op.cit.

level since 1974. It dropped slightly below 2,000 in the following year but now continues to oscillate at the threshold level.

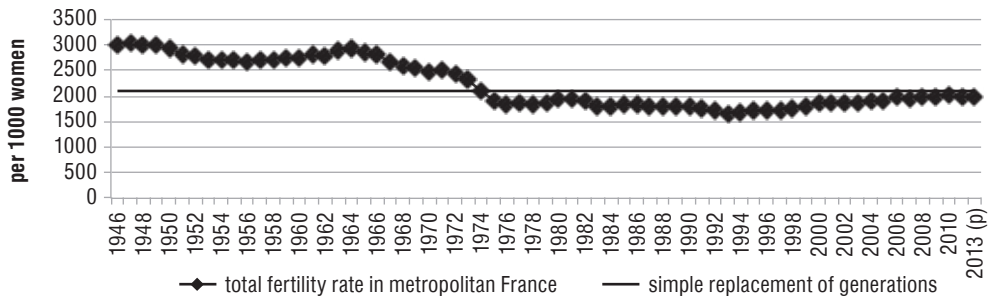


Figure 3. Total fertility rate in metropolitan France starting from 1946

Source: own calculation and work based on Table 6.

Mortality and life expectancy

According to provisional data published by INSEE, in 2013 there were 572,000 deaths in total in France (except Mayotte), including 561,000 in the metropolitan France. More and more generations of citizens reach an age at which the mortality becomes ever higher. This automatically leads to growth in mortality levels, however does not provide sufficient explanation for the sudden increase in 2012. The high number of deaths in that year (569,868 in France and 559,227 in *la Métropole*) clearly stands out in comparison to the preceding year (545,057 and 534 795 respectively)²⁹. A more detailed analysis of the mortality phenomenon in 2012 shows that over the first fifteen days of 2012 metropolitan France suffered unusually low temperatures (it was the fourth coldest February since 1950), a flu epidemic that reached its peak in late February and was still raging at the beginning of March, as well as other illnesses on a large scale, including respiratory tract diseases and stomach or intestinal infections. Those epidemics not only directly impacted the mortality levels, but could also have led to greater vulnerability of sensitive and weak individuals, shifting the over-mortality to the following months. In 2011, climatic and epidemiological conditions were significantly more favourable, which contributed to the lessening the extent of the analysed demographic phenomenon, especially towards the end of

²⁹ Cf. INSEE, *Population changes*, http://www.insee.fr/en/themes/detail.asp?reg_id=0&ref_id=bi-lan-demo&page=donnees-detaillees/bilan-demo/pop_age3.htm, access 10.04.2014.

the year³⁰. In 2013 deaths were spread over the year as in 2012, with higher mortality in the first four months of the year. February and March were particularly cold in 2013; a flu epidemic that began in late December 2012 lasted 13 weeks; finally, the heat wave in the second half of July brought a bit more deaths than usual (July 2013 was the third warmest July since 1900, after 1983 and 2006)³¹. As per infant mortality, it has remained at a constant low level in recent years.

The data on total number of deaths and infant deaths in metropolitan France, along with corresponding indicators for the 1990s and 2000s, are presented in Table 7³². Adopting a longer timeframe of analysis allows us to see that the mortality trend is generally slightly wave-shaped, and does not demonstrate a straightforward increase or decrease. Over 22 years the lowest number of deaths in France was noted in 2004 (509,429), while the highest in 2013 (561,000). Except for 2012, relatively high mortality was also recorded in 2003 (552,339).

Table 7. Total number of deaths, infant deaths, mortality rate per 1,000 people and infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births in metropolitan France in 1991–2013

Year	Deaths of all ages	Mortality rate per 1,000 inhabitants	Number of children dead before the age of 1	Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births
1991	524,685	9.2	5,511	7.3
2001	531,073	8.9	3,438	4.5
2011 (p)	534,795	8.5	2,604	3.3
2012 (p)	559,227	8.8	2,643	3.3
2013 (p)	561,000	8.8	Na	Na
(p) – provisional data for deaths in 2013; for mortality rate in 2011–2013				
na – data not available				

Source: own work based on INSEE, *Banque de données macro-économiques (BDM)*, <http://www.bdm.insee.fr/bdm2/choixCriteres.action?codeGroupe=62>, access 10.04.2014.

The mortality rate among children aged less than one year, which is usually low in highly developed countries, constitutes an important factor affecting mortality statistics. In the metropolitan France, the total number of infant deaths has been constantly decreasing for over two decades, which is of great importance for the country's demographic potential. Fewer deaths at such an early stage of life means

³⁰ V. Bellamy, C. Beaumel, *Bilan démographique 2012: la population croît, mais plus modérément*, „Insee Première” 2013, no. 1429, http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/document.asp?reg_id=0&ref_id=ip1429, access 10.04.2014.

³¹ Ibidem.

³² The table contains data only for selected years. The complete data for each year, cf. INSEE, *Banque de données macro-économiques (BDM)*, op.cit.

that more children will live up to their childbearing age. In 1991, approximately 5,500 infants died, 10 years later it was already only 3,438 and in 2012–2,643. It is important to note that between 1991 and 2012 infant mortality rate decreased nearly twofold. Those favourable changes are reflected in the infant mortality rate trend, which shifted from 7.3 deaths of children less than one year of age per 1,000 live births in 1991 to 3.3 in 2012.

Regardless of pure statistical data on the mortality phenomenon and mortality rate discussed above, it is worth taking a closer look at the **causes of death** in metropolitan France. For this purpose, the main death causes in 2001 and 2011 were analysed. The comparative approach shows that in the early 2000s these included cardiovascular diseases (30%) and tumours (28%). Respiratory tract diseases and external reasons (including transport accidents, suicides and murders) had relevance of 6% and 8% respectively. Moreover, 5% of deaths resulted from digestive tract diseases and 3% from mental and behavioural disorders. In 2011, the two most important causes of death did not change, however the impact of tumours grew to 30% and the cardiovascular diseases' impact decreased to 26%. External reasons and causes related to digestive tract diseases both decreased by 1 percentage point each. The number of deaths due to respiratory tract diseases remained unchanged. Mortality resulting from infectious and parasitic diseases, including AIDS, was 2% in 2001 and 2011. The share of other causes increased over a decade from 18% to 21%³³.

The mean life expectancy by age (in the 0th, 1st, 20th, 40th and 60th year of life) and sex in metropolitan France between 1991 and 2013 is demonstrated in Table 8³⁴. In order to have a clearer picture of the situation, we should concentrate on the life expectancy trend amongst the French, both men and women, only for chosen years of life within the last two decades. In order to do this, an analysis has been made on the value changes for 0-year-olds (moment of birth), 20-year-olds (conventional moment of reaching adulthood in the economic sense, i.e. working age) and 60-year-olds (conventional moment of reaching old age, i.e. retirement age).

³³ INSEE, *Principales causes de décès en 2011*, http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/tableau.asp?ref_id=natfps06205, access 10.04.2014.

³⁴ The table contains data only for selected years. The complete data for each year, cf. INSEE, *Espérance de vie à divers âges, France métropolitaine*, http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/detail.asp?ref_id=bilan-demo&page=donnees-detaillees/bilan-demo/pop_age3d.htm, access 10.04.2014.

Table 8. Life expectancy by age and sex in metropolitan France in 1991–2013

Year	Life expectancy at a given age (in years)									
	Men					Women				
	0	1	20	40	60	0	1	20	40	60
1991	72.9	72.5	54.0	35.7	19.2	81.2	80.7	62.0	42.7	24.4
2001	75.5	74.9	56.3	37.5	20.7	82.9	82.3	63.5	44.1	25.7
2011 (p)	78.4	77.7	59.0	39.9	22.7	85.0	84.3	65.4	45.8	27.4
2012 (p)	78.5	77.8	59.0	39.9	22.6	84.9	84.1	65.3	45.7	27.2
2013 (p)	78.7	78.0	59.3	40.1	22.7	85.0	84.3	65.5	45.8	27.3
(p) – provisional data										

Source: own work based on INSEE, *Espérance de vie à divers âges, France métropolitaine*, http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/detail.asp?ref_id=bilan-demo&page=donnees-detaillees/bilan-demo/pop_age3d.htm, access 10.04.2014.

The analysis permits the following conclusions:

1. On average, life expectancy at any age, regardless of sex, is constantly increasing. For instance, life expectancy for male children at birth was 72.9 years in 1991, and 78.7 in 2013. Girls had 81.2 years of life ahead at the beginning of the 1990s and 85 years in 2013, respectively. Therefore, boys' life expectancy increased by more years (5.8 years) compared to girls' (3.8 years). The average life expectancy for 60-year-old women grew from 24.4 years in 1991 to 27.3 years in 2013 (+2.9 years), while this value for men grew from 19.2 to 22.7 years (+3.5 years).
2. The average life expectancy at any age (0, 20 and 60 years old) in the period between 1991 and 2013 was a few years longer for women; however, this difference has been diminishing every year. In 1991, at birth, girls had on average 8.3 more years ahead than boys, in 2001 it dropped to 7.4 years, and in 2013 it stood at 6.3 years. In 1991, 20-year-old women could live 8 years longer on average than men, 10 years later it was 7.2 years and in 2013–6.2 years. In 1991, women entering the retirement age had 5.2 years more ahead than men and in 2013 this difference dropped to 4.6 years.

International migrations

In contemporary France, as is the case with a few other Western European states, the attention of researches tends to focus only on a single aspect of international migrations, namely on the issue of immigration, although the reverse phenomenon – the outflow of its inhabitants – can be observed in all of them as well. There is no consistent or efficient system to monitor the size or the nature of emigration in France. The number

of emigrants estimated by the French government is incomparably lower than the one representing people arriving in the country. Given the fact that statistical data on immigration is not only more available, complete, reliable and up-to-date but also the fact that immigration has more impact on the general situation in France, in this paper the analysis of international migrations also focuses first and foremost on immigration.

There are a few fundamental notions distinguished in French subject-specific resources with respect to immigration: foreigner (*étranger*), immigrant (*immigré*, *immigrant*) and [direct] descendant of an immigrant or immigrants (*descendant [direct] d'immigré(s)*).

A **foreigner** is understood as a person living in France who does not have French citizenship. However, later in life, such a person can obtain citizenship different to the one she or he already has. A child born of parents who are both foreigners is considered a foreigner at birth, excluding the scenario where both parents were born in France. Starting from the 13th year of life, such a child has a possibility to obtain French citizenship under the condition of residing in France. An **immigrant**, on the other hand, is a person who lives in France, born as a foreigner in another country. The provided definition approved by the High Council for Integration (*Haut Conseil à l'Intégration*, HCI)³⁵ in 1991 combines two key features – country of birth and nationality at birth. An immigrant is no longer a foreigner after obtaining French citizenship. Some foreigners were born in France and therefore are not considered immigrants. In 2008, there were 3.7 million foreigners and 5.3 million immigrants recorded. Altogether, 3.2 million people are immigrants and foreigners at the same time. Immigrants constitute 8% of the whole population³⁶.

In 2008, four out of ten immigrants did not have French citizenship. **Direct descendants of immigrants** who were born in France, also referred to as the “second generation of immigrants”, did not experience the same issue. In some studies published by INSEE they are defined as individuals born in France with at least one parent who is an immigrant. At the end of 2008 there were 4.5 million people that met the criteria of that definition among the group of 18-year-olds and older living in France; although only just over half of them also had a non-immigrant parent. Out of all minor children born on the country's territory 2.1 million live in a family where at least one parent is an immigrant. Those two figures combined, it is estimated that nearly 6.7 million individuals are direct descendants of immigrants born in France,

³⁵ Cf. Haut Conseil à l'Intégration (HCI), *Pour un modèle français d'intégration: premier rapport annuel*, La Documentation française, mars 1991.

³⁶ INSEE, *Immigrés et descendants d'immigrés en France – édition 2012*, Insee Références, octobre 2012, p. 96, <http://www.insee.fr/fr/publications-et-services/sommaire.asp?codesage=IMMFRA12>, access 10.04.2014.

which corresponds to 11% of population living within households in this country. Furthermore, at the end of 2008, 460,000 adults residing in a given country were born as French people abroad (outside France) of a parent who was born abroad as a foreigner. They inherited the citizenship from the second parent – the French. Considering the fact that they acquired French citizenship at birth, they are no longer immigrants. At the same time, because of having been born abroad (outside France), they are not included in the quoted definition of a direct descendant of an immigrant. In majority of cases the foreign parent has never even migrated to France. In brief, in the INSEE study from 2012 on immigrant and foreign population, people born abroad as French of a parent born abroad as a foreigner are not distinguished as a separate group in statistical analyses. They are included within the category dominating in the French population, which is the group of non-immigrants excluding descendants of immigrants (or people who are not directly involved in immigration). At the end of 2008, 10.1 million individuals (21%) of the population aged 18 or more, living in France, had at least one parent of foreign origin who was born abroad³⁷.

In the country under investigation, immigration has a long tradition. Table 9 presents the share of foreigners and immigrants in the total population of metropolitan France between 1921 and 2010 according to the dates of selected consecutive population censuses.

Table 9. Share of foreigners and immigrants in the total population of metropolitan France in selected years from 1921–2010 period

Year	Share in total population						Total population		Share in total population	
	French by birth		French by acquisition		Foreigners				Immigrants	
	in ths	in %	in ths	in %	in ths	in %	in ths	in %	in ths	in %
1921	37,012	95.4	254	0.7	1,532	4.0	38,798	100	1,429	3.7
1946	37,251	93.5	853	2.1	1,744	4.4	39,848	100	1,986	5.0
1968	45,675	92.0	1,316	2.7	2,664	5.4	49,655	100	3,281	6.6
1975	47,765	90.8	1,392	2.6	3,442	6.5	52,599	100	3,887	7.4
1982	49,160	90.5	1,422	2.6	3,714	6.8	54,296	100	4,037	7.4
1990	51,275	90.5	1,780	3.1	3,597	6.3	56,652	100	4,166	7.4
1999	52,903	90.4	2,355	4.0	3,263	5.6	58,521	100	4,309	7.4
2010*	56,271	89.7	2,789	4.4	3,705	5.9	62,765	100	5,406	8.6

* Data on January 1st

Field: metropolitan France, data from selected population censuses

Source: own work based on INSEE, *Part des populations étrangères et immigrées en 2010*, http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/tableau.asp?reg_id=0&ref_id=NATTEF02131, access 10.04.2014.

³⁷ Ibidem.

In Table 9, the total population has been divided into four categories: French by birth, French by acquisition, foreigners and immigrants. Data are presented in absolute as well as in percentage terms. The percentages for the first three groups in consecutive years add up to 100% because the criterion of belonging to each was: holding French citizenship (French by birth and French by acquisition) or not holding it (foreigners). Immigrants constitute an additional, separate category which can include a number of foreigners (individuals who lived in France but did not obtain the citizenship) as well as a number of French citizens by acquisition (who arrived as foreigners but obtained citizenship, for instance by naturalisation or by marrying a French citizen). According to the aforementioned definition, an immigrant is an individual living in the country in question who was born abroad (outside the metropolitan France or “overseas” France) as a foreigner. The percentage of native French people has continued to decline since 1921, when it stood at 95.4%. In 1975 it fell to 90.8% and in 2010 it declined further below 90%, while the share of French people by acquisition grew from 0.7% (1921), through 2.6% (1975) to 4.4% (2010). The percentage of foreigners reached the following levels in the years in question: 3.9%, 6.5% and 5.9%, respectively.

On the other hand, Table 10 shows the distribution of immigrants in France by country of birth for selected years from the 1975–2008 period, which correspond to consecutive population censuses.

In 1975, 63% of immigrants came from countries which at present belong to the EU – 27 against 37% who originated from outside this regional organisation. In 2008, the proportions reversed – 34% against 66%, respectively. It should be noted that since 1999 the way of classifying immigrants born in the USSR has changed: people born in the Baltic states were included as part of the EU – 27, whilst people born in Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova or the Russian Federation were considered born in other European countries (outside the EU – 27) and immigrants from the remaining former Soviet republics (Azerbaijan, Armenia, etc.) were categorised as coming from Asian states. Moreover, Slovenia, until 1990 a part of former Yugoslavia, today belongs to the EU. The share of Portuguese, Italian and Spanish immigrants in the total immigrant population is dropping, whereas the share of Algerians has remained the same (13%) since 1990. The contribution of people from Morocco and Turkey has also stayed relatively stable.

Table 10. Distribution of immigrants by country of birth (in percentages) in France in 1975–2008

Immigrants born in:	1975	1982	1990	1999	2008
EU – 27	63	53	47	41	34
Spain	15	12	9	7	5
Italy	17	14	11	9	6
Portugal	17	16	14	13	11
other countries of the EU – 27	14	12	12	12	12
outside the EU – 27	37	47	53	59	66
other European countries	3	3	3	3	4
Algeria	14	15	13	13	13
Morocco	6	9	11	12	12
Tunisia	5	5	5	5	4
other African countries	2	5	7	9	13
Turkey	2	3	4	4	4
Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam	1	3	4	4	3
other Asian countries	1	2	4	5	7
America and Oceania	2	2	4	4	5
USSR	1	1	0	n/a	n/a
Total (in thousands)	3,870	4,087	4,238	4,387	5,342
n/a – not applicable, the USSR ceased to exist as a state in international relations Data from population censuses					

Source: own work based on INSEE, *Immigrés et descendants d'immigrés en France – édition 2012*, Insee Références, octobre 2012, p. 101, http://www.insee.fr/fr/ffc/docs_ffc/ref/IMMFRA12_g_Flot1_pop.pdf, access 10.04.2014.

Figure 4 demonstrates the share of direct descendants of immigrants broken down into seven age groups, each of them spanning a period of five years, and three categories depending on the immigration status among their parents. In 2008, the participation of direct descendants continued to fall with every following age group distinguished for metropolitan France. They were most numerous in the 18–20 age group (17%). Amongst the inhabitants aged between 31 and 35 the percentage was only 12.8%. For the last three categories it dropped below 10%. The share of 41–45 and 46–50-year-old groups was at 7.5% level. The data shown in the figure should be interpreted in the following way: in the analysed year 17.1% of adults aged between 18 and 20 were direct descendants of immigrants; 9.3% were descendants of parents both of whom are immigrants; in 3.7% of cases only mother was an immigrant. In every age group, individuals with both immigrant parents prevail in the entire population of direct immigrant descendants. People with immigrant father rank second in number terms, followed by people with immigrant mother.

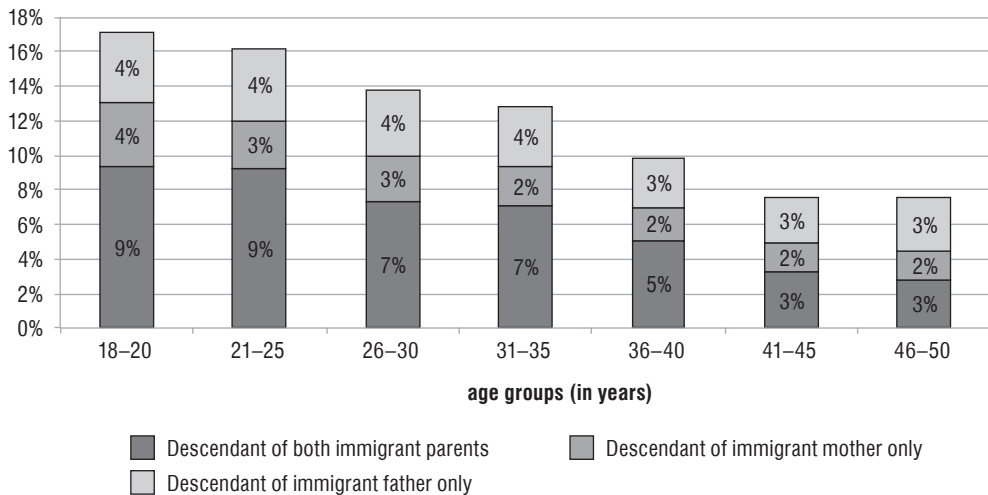


Figure 4. Share (in percentages) of direct descendants of immigrants by age and parents' status (both immigrant parents / immigrant mother / immigrant father) in the total population of metropolitan France in 2008

The scope of the studied population: adults born between 1958–1990 lived in a typical household in metropolitan France.

Source: own work based on C. Borrel, B. Lhommeau, *Être né en France d'un parent immigré*, „Insee Première” 2010, no. 1287, http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/document.asp?ref_id=ip1287, access 10.04.2014.

In the context of general discussion about foreigners and immigrants in France, it is also worth addressing the question of **acquisition of French citizenship**. It means a situation where a person who was not French at birth is granted French citizenship later in life. This acquisition is attainable under specific conditions determined by law. In general, we can distinguish two ways of acquiring French nationality³⁸:

- through declaration – as a result of specific personal circumstances (mainly when marrying a French citizen or acquiring French nationality by young foreigners born and living in France),
- pursuant to the decision of public authorities (naturalisation).

Young foreigners born in France become French nationals by right when they reach 18 years of age under the condition that they live in the country's territory and have lived there for five years consecutively or non-consecutively since the age of 11. Additionally, from the age of 16 those individuals can apply for earlier acquisition of French nationality by submitting a declaration to a competent court. Similarly, parents of such a child of foreign origin born in France may apply for citizenship on

³⁸ INSEE, Definition of *Acquisition de la nationalité française*, <http://www.insee.fr/fr/methodes/default.asp?page=definitions/acquisition-nation-francaise.htm>, access 10.04.2014.

child's behalf once she or he has reached the age of 13. However, this can only happen with the child's consent. Also, the youth needs to have lived in France consecutively or non-consecutively for five years from the age of 8³⁹.

In French, the term "nationalité", which in literal sense means "nationality", refers both to "individual's relation to the country (citizenship, "citoyenneté" in French) as well as to the national community (nationality)"⁴⁰. French academic literature on legal, social and political issues often distinguishes two main categories of citizens: 1) French nationals by birth, natives (*Français de souche*); 2) French citizens (*français*) – French by acquisition, for instance as a result of naturalisation or the rule of dual *jus soli*. In this context, another division into three categories is also applied in France: residents, immigrants and foreigners. The fundamental criterion in terms of determining which country an individual belongs to from the legal point of view is place of birth, which in fact means following the *jus soli*. It means that being born in a country's territory might result in the inherent right to this country's citizenship. In Germany, on the other hand, a different criterion based on kinship is used – *jus sanguinis*. Moreover, other prerequisites for being granted citizenship of a specific country are: marrying a citizen of that country and residing there for a long period of time (naturalisation). It is worth noting that birth and kinship are the conditions that lie beyond the person's control, whilst the two additional prerequisites apply primarily to immigrants⁴¹.

Generally speaking, immigrants who remained foreigners are more numerous than those who acquired French citizenship. In 2008, 60% of immigrants were foreigners. Between the 1911 and 1926 censuses the share of immigrants who became French nationals fell slightly and rose afterwards until 1954, when it reached 34% of the total immigrant population. It dropped again to 29% in mid-1970s but increased to 31% at the beginning of the 1990s. In 2008, 40% of immigrants in the country had French citizenship. The percentage of French citizens by acquisition kept falling

³⁹ INSEE, Definition of *Acquisition de la nationalité française pour les jeunes, pour les majeurs*, <http://www.insee.fr/fr/methodes/default.asp?page=definitions/acquis-nation-franc-jeunes.htm>, access 10.04.2014. French nationality is not automatically attributed to every person born on the French territory. *Jus soli* is valid only in few instances: in the case of children born in France of unknown parents, of parents who are stateless or are both immigrants and citizenship is not passed onto children (this situation refers to parents coming from countries where according to the applicable Muslim law children born out of extramarital relationships or adopted do not get citizenship. The same applies to countries where only the *jus soli* is respected so citizenship cannot be granted to children born abroad). Cf. *Acquisition de la nationalité française*, Service Public, <http://vosdroits.service-public.fr/N111.xhtml>, access 10.04.2014.

⁴⁰ K. Wróblewska-Pawlak, *Jak zostaje się Francuzem*, „Studia Europejskie” 2004, nr 4, s. 108, http://www.ce.uw.edu.pl/pliki/pw/4-2001_Wroblewska-Pawlak.pdf; Cf. Z. Sokolewicz, *Obywatelstwo a narodowość. Uwagi w związku z ustanowieniem obywatelstwa Unii Europejskiej*, „Studia Europejskie” 1997, nr 1, s. 13–35.

⁴¹ K. Wróblewska-Pawlak, *op.cit.*, p. 108–110.

after a period of increased immigration which followed the two world wars. In fact, in those two time spans, the intense influx of new immigrants inherently augmented the number and share of immigrants of foreign origin in the total number of immigrants in France. Within one century the share of immigrants who acquired French citizenship in the total number of population increased by 800%. In 2008, it reached 3% (2.2 million people)⁴².

Regardless of the timeframe and country of origin (except Asian states), one can observe that women acquire French nationality more often than men. In 2008, 43% of female immigrants were French, exceeding the number of male immigrants by 4.4%. The share of immigrants with French citizenship rises naturally in the case of people residing in France for long periods of time. Therefore, just over one immigrant out of ten who had lived in France for less than 5 years in 2008 had French citizenship in comparison to over 50% of those who had lived there for at least 20 years. The majority of immigrants from Spain and Italy residing in France for many years became French nationals. Immigrants from Southeast Asia, however, acquired French citizenship even more often but for different reasons; those were mainly political refugees who settled in the country of asylum and acquired its citizenship. Interestingly enough, only 4 out of 10 Algerian or Moroccan immigrants acquired French nationality despite the fact that their share in the population has continued to rise since 1999 (it has increased by over 15% since then). Finally, a major fraction of Turkish and Portuguese immigrants decided to keep their original citizenship even though the percentage of immigrants coming from Turkey who became French nationals by naturalisation has almost doubled since 1999. More than half of the immigrants (52% to be precise, which corresponds to 550,000 people) aged between 18 and 50 acquired French citizenship while also keeping their original one. A similar tendency is rarely observed amongst Southeast Asians, whereas in the group of Algerians and Tunisians, seven out of ten have dual citizenship (French and the one of their country of origin)⁴³.

In 2010, **family-related reasons** were the main prompt for immigration (45% of residence permits obtained for the first time). The second most prominent factor was furthering one's studies in France (31%). Residence permits granted for professional (business) as well as humanitarian purposes were at 9% each; nonetheless they contributed to the influx of immigrants to a lesser extent. In the past four years, the number of residence permits obtained for family-related reasons fluctuated between 86,000 and 90,000 per annum. Primarily (60% of the total number of family-related

⁴² INSEE, *Immigrés et descendants d'immigrés...*, op.cit., p. 112.

⁴³ Ibidem.

residence permits), this concerned those whose family lives in France. When it comes to students, the number of granted permits for educational reasons initially fell by 13% between 2003 and 2005 but increased later from 46,500 in 2005 to 60,000 in 2010. Last but not least, it is worth noting that Africans (54%), especially Algerians and Moroccans, were the most numerous group amongst the foreigners who obtained their residence permit for the first time in 2010. Asians represented 25% of the total number, people originating from the US and Oceania – 16%, whilst people from the Balkans and the former USSR – 5%. This distribution differs depending on the reasons for immigration. For instance, 6 out of 10 Maghrebis and Turks came to France because of their families and 6 out of 10 Chinese citizens emigrated from their country of origin to study in France⁴⁴.

The subject of international migration is extremely popular in France and thus the amount of statistical data (both primary and secondary) as well as documents collected by public administration institutions and non-governmental organisations with respect to this issue is rather extensive. Yet, those materials focus mainly on one aspect of this demographic phenomenon only – the immigration. The available pieces of information covering **emigration** are fragmentary and limited, which is due to a very simple fact – France is generally perceived as a host country for immigrants rather than a country from which people tend to emigrate. Therefore, the research effort focuses on immigration, the population of immigrants as well as foreigners in France and their integration. Emigrants originating from the studied country are mentioned rather sporadically and only in the historical approach⁴⁵. French demographic researcher Hervé le Bras raised the fact that there are no adequate methods to measure emigration, especially among the French youth and the reasons for their leaving the country⁴⁶. It is clear that a fraction of French people do live abroad. The activity of consulates and consular sections of the French Republic dotted around the whole world as well websites dedicated to the situation of French nationals living outside the country constitute vivid evidence⁴⁷.

Information about the size of the group of French citizens residing abroad comes mainly from the statistics based on the number of French people who register

⁴⁴ Ibidem.

⁴⁵ Cf. V. de Luca Barrusse, *Démographie sociale de la France (XIXe – XXIe siècle)*, PUF, Paris 2010, p. 196.

⁴⁶ Cf. H. Le Bras, *Les 4 mystères de la population française*, Odile Jacob, Paris 2007, p. 12.

⁴⁷ For instance, cf.: La présence française à l'étranger, France Diplomatie, <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/vivre-a-l-etranger/la-presence-francaise-a-l-etranger-4182/>; Maison des Français de l'Étranger (MFE), <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/vivre-a-l-etranger/preparer-son-depart-a-l-etranger/la-maison-des-francais-de-l/>; Assemblée des Français de l'étranger, <http://www.assemblee-afe.fr/>, access 10.04.2014.

in diplomatic missions and consular posts⁴⁸, especially for the purpose of participating in presidential and general elections. Thus obtained data are a valid and reliable source of information; however, it is not comprehensive since it does not include all French citizens living abroad. For the same reason, it should not be compared against the statistical data on immigration in France in order to calculate the levels of international migrations as it would result in a methodologically incorrect outcome.

On December 31, 2013, the world register recorded 1 642 953 French citizens residing outside France, which meant a 2% surge in comparison to the figure from the previous year. The increase was higher than the one recorded between 2012 and 2011 (1.1%). With an average annual growth rate of 3%, the number of French nationals registered abroad went up by nearly 35% over the past ten years. This growth is accompanied by occasional trend breaks. For instance, the change observed in 2011 is explained by the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2012, which likely prompted the French to register massively. This influenced the strong growth recorded in 2011 and the attenuation of the increase in 2012. 2013 was characterized by the increase in the number of French citizens registered as living abroad. This was a pre-election year – the election of representatives of French nationals living outside France and the European elections are held in 2014⁴⁹.

The increase in the number of French nationals living outside France in 2013 in comparison to 2012 differs depending on the region of the world. In francophone African countries and in South and Central America, the number of registered French grows at approximately the same pace as it does on a global scale, which was 2% in 2013. The highest growth rates are recorded in North America (4.4%), the Asia – Pacific region (4.2%) and in North Africa (4%). Europe outside the EU is 4th with the result of 3%. In the Middle East (0.8%) and in the EU (0.4%) the scale of the increase is lower than the global rate in 2013. Non-francophone Africa represents a zero growth rate. More than half of the French nationals abroad live in Europe, 19.1% in Americas and 14.6% in Africa. Only 8.4% of the recorded French population resides in the Middle East and 7.6% in the Asia – Pacific region⁵⁰.

When analysing the number of French citizens registered as living abroad in early 21st century, it should be emphasized that the majority of them settle in the neighbouring Switzerland. According to official data, nearly 163,600 French lived there in 2013.

⁴⁸ Cf. *Français de l'étranger: inscriptions au registre des Français établis hors de France (2001–2013)*, 13 octobre 2013, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et du Développement International, <http://www.data.gouv.fr/fr/dataset/francais-de-l-etranger-inscriptions-au-registre-des-francais-etablis-hors-de-france-2001-2013>, access 10.04.2014.

⁴⁹ *La présence française à l'étranger*, France Diplomatie, op.cit.

⁵⁰ Ibidem.

In the same year, apart from Switzerland, more than 100,000 French nationals were registered in each of the following states: United States, United Kingdom, Belgium and Germany. A great number of them (more than 50,000) also resided in Spain, Canada and Israel. Between 2001 and 2013, out of all 31 states prevailing in terms of the number of French people living there (more than 10,000), only one observed their outflow – the Ivory Coast (the figure dropped by more than 2,000 persons). The remaining states recorded an increase in the number of French citizens in absolute terms. In 2013 those 31 countries accounted for 83% of all the French officially residing abroad⁵¹.

* * *

The analysis of selected aspects of France's demographic potential in the late 20th and early 21st century has yielded the following key conclusions:

- On January 1, 2014, the population of France stood at 65.8 million inhabitants, 63.9 million of which live in the metropolitan France. Over the past 30 years the population of France has increased by nearly 9.7 million, with a positive change of 17.2%. Similarly to the situation in recent years, in 2011, the demographic dynamics were mainly determined by a large number of births and relatively low number of deaths. It was to a lesser extent affected by the migration balance.
- In 2013 (as at January 1), France accounted for 13.1% of the total EU population, making it the second most populated member state. Germany was at the forefront, the UK came third and Italy fourth.
- At the beginning of the second decade of 2000 s, the base of the population pyramid in France broadened significantly, which means that the new, youngest generations are increasingly more numerous. This applies to both men and women. The expansion of the top part of the pyramid, representing people above 70 years of age, indicates the inevitable ageing of the French society.
- In recent years, fertility rates in France have been high, with the total fertility rate approaching the threshold of 2,100, widely perceived as guaranteeing a simple replacement of generations. The mortality rate among children who are less than one year old is low. This is very significant for the country's demographic potential – fewer deaths in such an early stage of life mean that more children will live up to their childbearing age. The life expectancy at any age, regardless of sex, continues to rise.

⁵¹ Cf. Français de l'étranger: inscriptions au registre des Français établis hors de France (2001–2013), op.cit.

- Immigration also constitutes an important factor determining the demographic situation in France. French statistical apparatus is highly developed in that respect as a result of the long tradition of immigration. Nonetheless, France, generally perceived more as a hosting state, also observes reverse migrations. Even so, there is a widespread shortage of suitable tools to analyse emigration.

An important element to add to the above conclusions is the fact that France, similarly to other European countries, is experiencing the ageing of its society, which is gradually accelerating. Since the beginning of 2000, the share of elderly people in the entire population surpassed 20%. Since then, they have continued to account for one fifth of the population. Both the decrease in the reproduction rate and the ageing of the population first occurred relatively early in France. The share of people aged 60 and more stood at 12% in 1870; to compare, in the UK it did not reach that level until 1931. This tendency was affected by a number of factors, which slowed it down. A considerable drop in mortality of infants and children until the 1970s resulted in keeping the share of young people in the whole population at the level of approximately 30%. *Baby boom* in its initial stages slowed down the ageing of the population by bringing young people into the society in the period between 1946 and 1974. However, children from that generation entered the 60+ group in the early 21st century, which means that they are gradually contributing to the third age group⁵².

According to INSEE's long-term forecast for metropolitan France (excluding overseas departments and other overseas territories) since 2010 and in accordance with its central scenario, if the demographic trends continue, on January 1, 2060 there will be 73.6 million inhabitants, which means an increase in the population number by 11.8 million in comparison to 2007. The number of French people (in *la Métropole*) over 60 years of age will have risen by more than 10 million⁵³. The ageing of the population is one of the central challenges when talking about demographic dynamics. There are however researchers who claim that the ageing of the French society goes hand in hand with its rejuvenation. Although the citizens live longer, their health at every age is improving in comparison to the 20th century⁵⁴.

To sum up, the demographic situation in France is relatively optimistic when compared to other European countries (as exemplified by the rising total population figure, being the second most populated state in the EU, having positive natural

⁵² V. de Luca Barrusse, op.cit., p. 51.

⁵³ N. Blanpain, O. Chardon, *Projections de population à l'horizon 2060 – Un tiers de la population âgé de plus de 60 ans*, „Insee Première” 2010, no. 1320, http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/document.asp?ref_id=ip1320, access 10.04.2014.

⁵⁴ J.-H. Lorenzi, J. Pelletan, A. Villemeur, *Rajeunissement et vieillissement de la France: une politique économique pour la jeunesse*, Descartes & Cie, Paris 2012.

increase rate and migration rate, approaching the threshold of generation renewal). The ageing of the population is one of the major demographic challenges for France; yet it is progressing at a slower pace than in the rest of Europe. Given its demographic situation, France actively seeks to define Europe-wide policy, for instance with respect to regulating international migrations.

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