



Foreword

A RETROSPECTIVE OF THE FIRST ISSUES OF *POPULATION* PUBLISHED IN 1946

Population celebrates its seventieth anniversary this year. To mark the occasion, we will take a look back at some of the very first articles published by the journal in 1946, the year of its creation.

In 1946, *Population* was the scientific showcase of the Institut national d'études démographiques (the French Institute for Demographic Studies, INED) founded some months earlier, in October 1945. Each issue was introduced by an editorial penned by Alfred Sauvy, INED's new director, under the title "Faits et problèmes du jour" (Topical facts and problems). Most authors were INED researchers, and practically all were men. Since then, the journal has become increasingly independent of its host institution. Recognized by the international research community, it is now a scientific journal open to all, welcoming authors from INED and elsewhere. *Population* is now available in both French and English (for 13 years, an annual selection of articles was published in English, but since 2002, all articles have been published in both languages), and authors now come from institutions across the world, with men and women equally represented.

While developing its editorial independence, *Population* still retains some of its original features. In its early years, each issue of the journal – already a quarterly publication – included eight or nine research articles, three to five shorter papers under the heading "Note et Documents" along with reviews of recently published books. All in all, the current version is not so very different. Each quarterly issue now comprises four or five articles, one or two short papers and a series of book reviews. Today's articles are fewer in number, but more lengthy, reflecting changing methods and higher levels of technicity. The vocabulary of demography has also evolved: some of the expressions in the articles of 1946 may seem outdated, or even inappropriate for a scientific journal. The first articles published in *Population* provided a highly instructive overview of specific topics, revealing an ambition to mark out a discipline that was gaining new recognition through the creation of INED. The goal of *Population* was – and still is – to disseminate demographic knowledge to a wide audience.

As one might expect, the articles in these first four issues of 1946 cover the three major themes of demography: fertility (several articles on large families), child and adult mortality, and migration, often examined in relation

to employment. Inevitably, the demographic impact of the Second World War is a central topic in that year (“Progrès technique, destructions de guerre et optimum de population” [Technical progress, war destruction and optimal population size] by Georges Letinier, “Conséquences de six années de guerre sur la population française” [Impact of six years of war on the French population] by Paul Vincent). Economic questions are also a central concern during this period of reconstruction. The article titles speak for themselves: “Plein emploi et pleine population” [Full employment and full population] by Alfred Sauvy, or “Richesses minières et peuplement : Lorraine, Sarre et Ruhr” [Mineral wealth and settlement: Lorraine, Sarre and Ruhr]. The link with public policy in France and abroad is already clearly visible, with articles looking at “family allowances”, “social and population policy in Denmark” or “social insurance in Canada”. There is already a strongly international flavour to the journal, with several articles on the demography of other countries, in Europe or elsewhere, but in most cases in the industrialized world. Examples include papers on “demographic change in the Netherlands or Belgium” (Jean Daric), “the demographic problems of Norway” or the factors influencing “fertility in the United States and Canada”. This interest in the demography of other continents has expanded over the years, and research on Southern countries now features largely in the journal.

Examination of data sources and methods was a major concern at the time, with the presentation of new sources, such as the “census of 10 March 1946”, new surveys on “the upturn in births” or more complex topics such as Jean Sutter’s survey on “intellectually deficient school-age children”. Methodological articles on “subsistence crises” (Jean Meuvret) or on “the use of family statistics” (Paul Vincent) published in these first issues, became references in their field.

The journal affirms its multidisciplinary ambition, with numerous articles on economic questions, and others which define demography in relation to other disciplines such as sociology (“Sociologie et démographie” [Sociology and demography] by Jean Stoetzel) or geography (“Démographie et géographie humaine” [Demography and human geography] by Louis Chevalier).

To mark this seventieth anniversary, we have chosen to republish four articles from 1946, one in each of our 2016 issues. Each one is accompanied by an introductory commentary that highlights the topicality, or obsolescence, of the research topic covered and, from a twenty-first century perspective, looks at how the issues have evolved over time.

The first issue of 2016 includes an article entitled “Assessment of French immigration needs” by Alfred Sauvy (1, 1946), with an introduction by François Héran. The second issue will feature an article by Paul Vincent on “Population ageing, pensions and immigration” (2, 1946), commented by Didier Blanchet. The third article, by a historical demographer, Jean Meuvret, concerns “Subsistence crises and the demography of France under the Ancien Régime” (4, 1946), analysed by Christine Théré and Isabelle Séguy. The fourth and last article of the series, written by Jean Bourgeois and entitled “Marriage, a seasonal

custom. Contribution to a sociological study of nuptiality in France” (4, 1946) is commented by Arnaud Regnier-Loilier and Wilfried Rault.

Population has now reached the life expectancy at birth of men born in France in that same year (1946), but not yet that of women (80 years according to the cohort life tables). We wish it continued success in the future, and many more years of rewarding discovery for its readers!

Olivia Samuel, Anne Solaz and Laurent Toulemon
Editors of Population

All Population articles since 1946 are available in electronic format via the Population website (www.journal-population.com) which links to the Cairn and Persée portals (for the oldest issues), and to Jstor (<http://www.jstor.org/>).



François HÉRAN*

ALFRED SAUVY AND IMMIGRATION

Commentary on the short paper published in 1946 in the first issue of *POPULATION*

Alfred Sauvy's short paper published in 1946 in the first issue of *Population* has a rather strange title: "Évaluation des besoins de l'immigration française" (Assessment of French immigration needs). In fact, it concerns neither "immigration needs", nor "French immigration", but rather the needs of France in terms of immigration. Just after the Liberation, France lacked the necessary manpower to undertake its economic reconstruction, and the idea of recruiting foreign workers, as was done after the First World War, seemed a logical one. Sauvy assumes that this utilitarian attitude to immigration is shared by all; he mentions the major contribution to be made by farmers, construction workers and miners brought in from abroad. But he takes the idea one step further: beyond their contribution to rebuilding the economy, immigrants would also provide a solution, over the longer term, to the country's demographic imbalance and, more specifically, to the challenge of population ageing. Like many of his contemporaries, Sauvy was haunted by this problem. In 1946, 16% of France's population was aged over 60. While this proportion was much smaller than that observed today (24%), it was a world record at the time, as Sauvy does not fail to point out. For Sauvy, this "abnormally high proportion" was attributable to the combined effects of secular population decline and the collapse of births during the Great War.

With considerable economy of means, Sauvy runs a simulation to determine France's needs in terms of immigration. His stated target is a "stationary population" as defined by Alfred Lotka, namely an "ideal" population in which young people are sufficiently numerous and fertile to ensure generation replacement and to maintain the "structural balance". The method is extremely simple. Sauvy takes the age structure of the French population on 1 January 1931, as indicated by the census of that year, then determines the number of old people aged 60 or above. He then calculates how many additional people would be needed in the other age groups in order to produce a stationary population pyramid. The difference between the actual situation and the model gives him the order of magnitude of the extra people needed. Why use the

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1931 census as a basis? Because it is the last one held in a context of full employment. Sauvy's goal of economic and demographic reconstruction does not imply taking France back to the conditions prevailing before the war, but aims rather to return to the level that preceded the crisis of the 1930s.

The conclusion he draws is striking: France will not return to demographic equilibrium unless it brings in some 5,290,000 immigrants, among whom 2,450,000 adults! In a country with just 40 million inhabitants (a contemporary provisional estimate), this meant increasing the general population by 13%. In what timeframe? Sauvy doesn't say. He compares two stocks without looking at the annual flows required for one to catch up with the other. So his model was of little use to political decision-makers. If we look at estimated net migration to France since 1946, we see that it was not until 2005 – some 60 years later – that the aggregate total reached the 5.3 million mark announced by Sauvy! Did he realize that his figure was grossly exaggerated? It is impossible to say, given the calmly composed tone of his announcement.

Clearly, this 1946 paper does not cast Sauvy as a precursor of the anti-immigration lobby. He never championed the idea of a closed population summoned to reproduce by its own means. Quite the contrary, his solution to the French ageing problem relied on bringing in young people from abroad. In his eyes, the stationary regime was by no means a synonym of closed reproduction. Later in the text he mentions the need to maintain inflows over the long term in order to restore the demographic balance through immigration. He indicates two ways of doing this: through “a 15% increase in births or a constant inflow of young immigrants” with a combination of both being possible. Here, Sauvy focuses on the migration scenario. His paper lays the foundations for the simulations of “replacement migration” developed later by Didier Blanchet (1989) and UN experts (2001): if we relied solely on the arrival of young migrants, how many would be needed over the years lead an ageing population to replacement level?

Is Sauvy hostile to settlement migration? Quite the contrary. Clearly, labour migration will be followed by family migration. Most migrants were still men in the 1920s because they were needed to make up for the military losses of 1914-1918. By 1946, the population shortfall concerned both men and women. And Sauvy concludes that no “demographic gains” will be made if immigrants are “condemned to singlehood”. To counteract ageing over the long term, a shift from labour migration to settlement migration was inevitable.

When Sauvy wrote this paper, he was unaware of how the baby boom was affecting birth numbers. The spectacular upturn was not detected until some months later. It was in the spring of 1947, in the journal *Population*, that Jean Bourgeois-Pichat published INSEE's extraordinary report for the year 1946, with its 840,000 births, a leap of 200,000 with respect to prewar levels. Bourgeois-Pichat talks of a 30% increase in “household productivity” (*sic*). But he is hesitant: is this a post-war catch-up effect linked to the return of prisoners

of war and labour deportees, or the start of a lasting trend, as suggested by the concomitant increase in births in several other countries? It was not until 1948 that Sauvy acknowledged that the baby boom was here to stay (Lévy, 1990). In early 1946, when he wrote this paper, he had no knowledge of the change under way, and the term baby boom had yet to be imported into France.

Sauvy's arguments are still coloured by the crisis of the 1930s. After the prosperity of the 1920s accompanied by mass immigration, xenophobic pressure led to the expulsion of numerous migrants and to measures prohibiting foreigners from exercising certain trades and professions. This was the only peacetime period in French history when net migration became negative. Sauvy did not believe in the long-term future of a policy that attracted or expelled migrants solely on the basis of economic circumstance. The three decades that followed showed that in France, at least, the so-called "Trente Glorieuses" were a period that combined rising births, migrant inflows and economic growth: the pattern of immigration was not countercyclical, but rather supported economic growth. It was not until the oil shock of 1973, when France put an end to labour immigration, that inflows of immigrants arriving mainly for family reunification or as foreign students became disconnected from the economy while also becoming a long-term phenomenon. As the baby boom came to an end, the major contribution of immigrants to the French population, as predicted by Alfred Sauvy some 70 years ago, became clear for all to see.

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PRESSES UNIVERSITAIRES DE FRANCE

ASSESSMENT OF FRENCH IMMIGRATION NEEDS

Few people now contest the need for large-scale immigration to France. Yet this almost unanimous agreement covers misunderstandings or, at the very least, serious differences in the arguments underpinning this shared viewpoint.

It is the immediate economic and social aspects that most readily attract attention, as has practically always been the case up to now:

from 1921 to 1931, a period of economic growth, demand for labour was considerable, prompting the government to introduce an immigration policy. Between 1921 and 1931 the number of foreigners entering the country totalled some 2 million;

but from 1931 to 1935, the reversal of the economic cycle modified not only population policy, but also the general outlook on the situation. The unemployment statistics led many to believe that the French population was too large.

Hence, it was external circumstances (world crisis) and the financial policy of the time (deflation) that led to the reversal of a flow dictated by profound underlying causes, and to a policy of expulsion of aliens previously admitted onto French soil. In fact, illegal entries (a manifestation of the natural flow) substantially reduced the scale of this forced emigration.

Today, demand for labour is once again very strong, prompted both by real reconstruction needs and by the inflationary process.

Of course, these alternating policies of either welcoming or expelling aliens have not been dictated by changes in demographic

needs which, for their part, remain very stable. Quite the contrary, it is the economic jolts and upsets that have dictated these population movements.

The argument of economic priority could indeed be applied with regard to immigration; it could be seen as a regulating mechanism to smooth the ups and downs of economic circumstance and policy. However, even setting aside the human factors, the feasibility of such a policy is open to doubt, and we are entitled to believe that the quest for full employment must be pursued by means other than the expulsion of a labour force judged surplus to demand.

These considerations suggest that immigration forecasts must not be calculated solely on the basis of current reconstruction needs, but must also take account of demographic needs which, by definition, are much more stable and more certain.

To take account of employment potential, we can refer to a historical precedent: the period of prosperity.

Comparison with the population of 1931 The census of 1931 took place just after the economic cycle reached its high point. The population had changed little between this peak (1929-1930) and the census date. As this population enjoyed full employment at that time, it can be considered as once again potentially employable.⁽¹⁾

The method used here does not propose the balance achieved in 1929 as an ideal, but simply builds upon a precedent and measures the interval that separates us from it.

The comparison is as follows (in thousands):

	1931	1946	Difference
Ages 20-39	12,970	10,490	+2,480
Ages 40-59	10,230	11,260	-1,030
Adult population	23,200	21,750	+1,450

We see that the adult population has fallen overall by 1,450,000. Considering neither immediate reconstruction needs nor the longer-

(1) The increase in budget expenditures, and in national spending more generally, has most probably even raised the optimal population size in the last 15 years.

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term needs linked to the growing number of old people (560,000) (which calls for more producers), immigration needs amount to 1,500,000 adults at the very least. Remember that we are not referring here to a purely demographic need, but to a labour potential recognized through experience.

In fact, taking account of reconstruction and, above all, of armament requirements and of the above-mentioned burden of old age, this figure of 1,500,000 must be seen as well below what is actually needed.

Let us now look at purely demographic needs.

Age structure These demographic needs are not precisely defined since several factors could be taken into consideration. Here, we will view things solely from the viewpoint – a very important one at that – of age distribution.

For a variety of reasons, among which economic factors occupy a large place, the age structure of the population plays a role that is perhaps more important than its total size.

The French population indeed has an abnormally high proportion of old people, in fact the highest in the world. We will try to determine by how much the young or adult population would have to increase to restore structural balance.

To simplify, we will reason in terms of four large age groups. Here is the approximate composition of the French population on 1 January 1946 (thousands):

	Males	Female	Total
Ages 60+	2,660	3,730	6,390
Ages 40-59	4,820	5,670	10,490
Ages 20-39	5,540	5,720	11,260
Ages 0-19	5,980	5,880	11,860
Total	19,000	21,000	40,000

We work on the general assumption that the population aged over 60 cannot be affected by migration, and hence that the structural balance can only be restored by acting on the other age groups.

a) Comparison with a stationary population

A stationary population is an ideal population that remains constant at all times, with the young cohorts completely replacing the older ones. Such a population has the same composition as the life table.

For France, this ideal composition would be as follows (based on pre-war mortality):

Ages 60+	14.1%
Ages 40-59	24.1%
Ages 20-39	29.4%
Ages 0-19	32.4%
Total	100.0%

Comparing this ideal with reality gives us the following, assuming that the number of old people remains invariable:

	Stationary population	Current population	Difference
Ages 60+	6,390	6,390	—
Ages 40-59	10,900	10,490	410
Ages 20-39	13,300	11,260	2,040
Ages 0-19	14,700	11,860	2,840
Total	45,290	40,000	5,290

With the current distribution, there are 3.4 adults per old person, hence 3.4 contributors per pension if retirement begins at age 60 (the actual age is probably slightly higher).

With a stationary population distribution, there would be 3.79 adults per old person. The average pension could be 11% higher, or the burden on the working population 10% lower.

If immigration were used to restore the demographic balance (which could not be subsequently maintained without a 15% increase in births or a constant inflow of young immigrants) a total of 5,290,000 immigrants would be needed, among whom 2,450,000 adults.

b) Comparison with foreign countries

The French population can also be compared with that of other countries. We have selected a country with an old population (England), one with a relatively young population (Holland) and one with a young population (USSR). Again assuming that the number of old people remains the same, here is the French population as it would be if it had

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the same age composition as these other countries (before the war):

	French population (thousands) adjusted to the population age structure of:		
	England	Holland	USSR
Ages 60+	6,390	6,390	6,390
Ages 40-59	11,400	12,500	15,000
Ages 20-39	14,700	19,000	32,100
Ages 0-19	13,000	16,500	44,600
Total	45,490	54,390	98,090

To achieve the same age composition as England, 5,490,000 immigrants would be needed, of whom 4,350,000 adults. This figure is slightly different from that given by the comparison with a stationary population, but it would include more adults and fewer children since the English population has large cohorts born around 1900, but a birth rate that fell sharply after the 1914-1918 war.

To achieve the same age composition as Holland, 14,390,000 immigrants would be needed, of whom 9,750,000 adults. Note that Holland has substantially reduced its mortality while its birth rate has fallen less than in other western countries.

Last, comparison with the USSR population gives such high figures that they are no more than a simple curiosity. We note, in particular, the disproportion between numbers of children: in the USSR, 7 children for 1 old person, in France, slightly less than 2.

Immigration by sex We cannot draw useful conclusions by comparing the current population with that of 1931, or with that of England or the USSR, which were affected by the 1914-1918 war.

Indeed, the question of the sexes must be examined from a different angle:

as marriages are rare above age 40, the question is primarily of importance between ages 20 and 39.

At these ages, women currently outnumber men by around 200,000.⁽²⁾ This difference, due mainly to higher wartime mortality

(2) A more precise calculation should include unmarried men and women. But it would not change the overall conclusions.

among men than women (soldiers, executed resistance fighters, deportees), is low (32 women for 31 men). It is much lower than that recorded after 1918 (1,400,000 men killed, and a large number of severely wounded).

From 1920 to 1931, immigration was dictated solely by considerations of labour demand, and most immigrants were men. Their arrival restored the sex balance that had been disrupted by war.

Immigration dictated solely by current reconstruction needs would again primarily concern men, but this time would create a sex imbalance in the opposite direction. The demographic gain would only be temporary since immigrants (or an equivalent number of French natives) would be condemned to singlehood.

Other factors

The purely demographic component and the number of available jobs are not the only factors determining immigration needs. Immigration may be limited by questions of housing, food supplies or tools, or by concerns about assimilation.

It may also be limited by external considerations (difficulty in finding emigrants, international agreements).

But it should also be noted that needs can change under the influence of immigration itself: the arrival of builders can resolve the housing problem, that of farmers can remove the obstacle of food supply, that of miners can substantially increase employment opportunities. Economic conditions are thus subject to change and can be modified by ensuring that immigrants are judiciously oriented. Demographic factors, on the other hand, do not have the same elasticity.

Conclusion

This brief overview of the demographic situation shows that the estimated need for immigration, based on current labour requirements (2 million according to official sources), is below the demographic need resulting from the age structure, even without bringing in the notion of optimum population, which would result in much higher figures.

The admission to France of new foreigners must not be seen, henceforth, as merely the temporary admission of workers (prisoners, for example), but as a veritable inflow of persons destined to settle in the country and establish roots here. This condition cannot be satisfied

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if the sex balance is disrupted on the basis of essentially temporary data.

A more exhaustive study is needed to examine the geographical distribution of needs. The problem is much more complex, even if viewing the subject from a demographic viewpoint alone. The consideration of age distribution, so powerful at national level, would not produce the same results. First, certain mountainous or poverty-stricken regions, deserted by their young for economic reasons, must not be repopulated; restoring their age structure would produce an anachronistic geographical distribution of the population. Second, economic and social compensations to support the elderly are implemented at national level and would not be practicable within an overly narrow sphere.

Economic considerations still remain important for the geographical distribution of new immigrants; nonetheless, they must often defer to general considerations concerning the adaptation of foreigners to their surroundings; and the capacity to adapt varies both by nationality and by region. This wide-ranging study, for which we do not have space here, will be the topic of future research.

Alfred SAUVY

