

# Declining birth rate in Europe

Addressing the demographic emergency

## • Introduction

The “Old Continent” is much more than a mere expression. The European Union (EU) is faced with a serious challenge: by 2100, its population will decrease by almost 7% compared with 2019, the equivalent of -31 million people. After years of steady increases, the population will peak at 449 million in 2026 before gradually declining to approximately 441 million in 2050, followed by 416 million at the turn of the century<sup>1</sup>, with the exclusion of enlargement.

The “demographic winter” raved by Pope Francis, to name but one, is mainly owing to the fact that the “baby boomer” generation of the 1950s and 60s are no longer of child-bearing age. On top of that, considerably fewer generations are following their example in the age range and younger women average fewer children than their mothers.

All EU Member States are affected by this development, albeit to varying degrees, and are making efforts to develop or strengthen their family policies. Despite the EU’s lack of dedicated expertise in this area, it is leveraging drivers such as encouraging a healthy work-life balance and promoting equal opportunities between men and women.

## I • Declining birth rate in the EU

### I GENERATION REPLACEMENT IS NO LONGER GUARANTEED

An ageing Europe. According to the baseline scenario of the latest population projections published by Eurostat<sup>2</sup>, the share of people aged 65 and above in the total European Union (EU-27) population is expected to increase from 20% at the start of 2019 to 31% by 2100; the share of people aged 80

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JULY 2022

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and above could even more than double, from 6% to 15%. Parallel to this, the proportion of children (aged 0-14) is projected to decrease from 15.2% (67.8 million) to only 13.9% (58 million) before further declining to 13.6% between 2035 and 2045.

This trend is the result of multiple factors, the most predominant of which is a declining birth rate. Over the years, and despite the slight rebound in 2008, **the number of live births in the EU has declined at a relatively steady pace, from 4.4 million in 2001 to just under 4.1 million in 2020**, with a modest uptick of 4.7 million births in 2008<sup>3</sup>. Record decreases were recorded in Portugal (-25%) and Italy (-24%) while increases of more than 20% were observed in Sweden, Cyprus and the Czech Republic<sup>4</sup>. It should also be noted that, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, 2020 was a unique year as far as demographics are concerned. During the period, 736,000 babies were born in France, the lowest number since 1945.

Another noteworthy point is that the crude birth rate in the EU<sup>5</sup>, which had risen from 10.2‰ in 2001 to 10.6‰ in 2008, has since fallen to 9.1‰ in 2020. The trend is widespread and despite the clear rate increases in nine Member States for the period, 15 or so Member States posted a decline with figures levelling off in Bulgaria, Lithuania and Austria. In 2020, the highest crude birth rates were observed in Ireland (11.2 births per 1,000 persons), Cyprus (11.1 ‰), France and Sweden (10.9‰), while Italy (6.8‰), Spain (7.2‰), Greece (7.9‰) and Portugal (8.2‰) recorded the lowest levels<sup>6</sup>.

While the absolute number of births across the EU has dipped at a practically constant pace, the number of children per woman has displayed more erratic trends over the last two decades. The total fertility rate<sup>7</sup>, obtained by adding the age-specific fertility rates for a given period, was up from 1.43 in 2001 to 1.57 in 2008-2010. It then dipped to 1.51 in 2013 before climbing slightly to 1.57 in 2016 and then falling again to a low of 1.50 in 2020<sup>8</sup>. This rate is significantly below the generation replacement level (2.1 children in developed countries), which is considered the required benchmark to ensure constant population size assuming there is a lack of migration<sup>9</sup>.

## I A PARTICULARLY WORRYING PICTURE FOR SOUTHERN EU COUNTRIES

Nonetheless, the picture emerging within the EU is mixed, with **higher fertility in the Northern Europe and lower fertility to the south of the continent**. Gilles Pison, Professor Emeritus at France's Natural History Museum (Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle) and Associate Researcher at the National Institute of Demographic Studies (Institut National d'Etudes Démographiques - INED)<sup>10</sup>, suggests that "This North-South divide was already visible 30 years ago, with deep-rooted mechanisms at play rather than cyclical economic and social factors."

**France remains the Member State with the highest fertility rate<sup>11</sup>** –although it is also trending downward (1.83 live births per woman in 2020 vs. 2.0 in 2014 and 1.86 in 2019)– ahead of Romania (1.80), the Czech Republic (1.71), Denmark (1.68) and Sweden (1.67), while the lowest rates were reported in Malta (1.13), Spain (1.19) and Italy (1.24)<sup>12</sup>. More generally, since 2001, the total fertility rate has fallen the most in Finland, Malta, Ireland and Luxembourg, while rising most in the Czech Republic and Romania.

A major demographic risk is on the horizon not only for Spain and Italy, but also Portugal and Greece, further amplified by the departure of many unemployed younger generations to Northern Europe. Aside from the tangible economic and social issues, specialists single out inequalities between men and women in these countries that are often more noticeable than the rest of Europe, not to mention less equal distribution of tasks in the home for couples. Policies to enable women to find a work-life balance are also less developed. Another suggested reason is that society all too often focuses on the notion that motherhood and work are incompatible, at least in a child's early years.

Conversely, **Germany has succeeded in raising its fertility rate (1.53)**, now slightly above the European average. In recent years, demographic concerns have led successive governments to invest in measures to help women find a better balance between their desire to have children and their professional aspirations as well as bolstering family policy by building childcare centres in large cities.

Though annual trends showed a dip since 2017, **Scandinavian countries saw a recovery in the birth rate during the pandemic**. This could result from a stronger attachment to work-life balance and incentive-based social policies (allowances, parental leave, support for childbearing, social safety nets for young parents), combined with overall healthy economies. The rise in rates is yet to be confirmed.

**Over the last three decades, Central and Eastern European countries have experienced erratic developments in their demographics.** The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and its resulting upheaval caused the fertility rate to plummet across the former communist bloc within a few years. A decade on and the indicator remained low in most of these bloc countries. The causes put forward pointed to the difficulties associated with a combination of numerous factors: transition to a market economy, decline in social policies, and adoption of Western values by younger generations of Western values (priority given to the fulfilment of personal desires and individual freedoms)<sup>13</sup>. Then, the indicator trended slowly up, before the financial crisis of 2007-2008 interrupted this rise, resuming when the crisis ended around 2012-2013 before it accelerated, enabling most of these countries to return to higher fertility rates. It is more a case of net migration, and particularly the large exodus of young people, which has led to the population decline of recent years in a good number of Central and Eastern European countries –Bulgaria, Latvia and Lithuania, and not forgetting Croatia, Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Romania. This exodus is accompanied by a fear of weakening or even erasing their cultural values prior to their disappearance.

### I LATER BIRTHS

In addition to the number of women of childbearing age and their fertility, many other factors influence demographics, such as financial support for families, childcare arrangements, the school age of young children, parental leave, flexible working arrangements and investment in early childhood. “Women in countries where they can work are the ones who have children. Fertility is, at the very least, maintained when the least qualified are unable to give up work

and where the most qualified are unable to give up children”, explains sociologist, Julien Damon (Associated research fellow at IJD)<sup>14</sup>.

The declining birth rate in the EU can be interpreted from various perspectives. Number one is societal through changing lifestyles, fewer and later marriages, changing family structures, changing mentalities, and the desire to have children later in life. Number two is material: high cost and shortage of housing, problems of unemployment, distance from the workplace, poverty among young generations and closure of local maternity clinics. Number three is psychological due to fear of the future, unemployment and downgrading, ‘eco-concerns’, and fear of an overpopulated planet.

For the birth of their first child, the average age of women, which was 28.9 years in the EU in 2014, has since increased steadily to 29.5 years in 2020<sup>15</sup>. This average age is on the rise in all Member States, climbing to 30 or over in several of them including Cyprus, Italy, Spain, Luxembourg, Ireland, Greece, the Netherlands and Portugal. Conversely, **the proportion of births to mothers aged 40 or over has more than doubled over the last twenty years** (5.5% in 2020) –representing 10.2% of births in Spain, and 8% or more in Ireland, Italy, Greece and Portugal. Running parallel to this phenomenon is an increase in the average age of mothers, which in turn, may lead to a larger proportion of childless women at the end of their reproductive years<sup>16</sup>.

All of this is compounded by an issue hitherto neglected or insufficiently observed by public authorities which is the **decline in fertility**. The latter could be linked in part to the delayed age for first time mothers as well as specific lifestyle factors such as smoking, stress and junk food or to endocrine disruptors. To tackle this problem, you would first have to ramp up information and prevention capabilities and take firm action on diet and behavioural practices.

## II • Family policies: encouraging birth rates and/or reducing inequalities

### I PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines public spending on family benefits as all financial support provided by governments which is exclusively for families and children, either in kind or in cash. Spending recorded in other social policy areas such as health and housing may also assist families, but not exclusively. As such it is not included as part of this indicator. The OECD breaks down public spending on the family into three main categories<sup>17</sup>:

- Child-related cash transfers to families with children, which includes child allowances (cash benefits), with payment levels that in some countries vary with the age and which are sometimes means-tested, and income support payments by governments during periods of parental leave and for single-parent families;
- Public spending on services for families with children (benefits in kind), which includes the direct financing or subsidisation of childcare and early childhood education facilities, public childcare support through earmarked payments to parents, public spending on assistance for young people and boarding schools, public expenditure on family services (i.e., support services provided in an external centre or at home for families in need);
- Financial support for families provided through the tax system. This includes exemptions (e.g., income from child benefits that is not included in the tax base), child tax allowances (amounts for children that are deducted from gross income and are not included in taxable income), and child tax credits (amounts that are deducted from the tax liability).

According to the OECD indicator, the level of public spending on family benefits varies considerably from one country to another: in 2017, it was around 3.40% of GDP in Denmark, 3.39% in Sweden, 2.88% in France,

2.86% in Finland, 2.73% in Hungary and 2.32% in Germany, but only 1.19% in Spain, 1.20% in Portugal, 1.49% in the Netherlands, 1.56% in Ireland and 1.62% in Greece<sup>18</sup>.

These differences are attributable to the degree of proactiveness on the part of the authorities, but are also linked to the country's demographic situation (proportion of young people), the school entry age, the greater or lesser scope of family benefits (family allowances, childcare services, parental allowances and leave) as well as the trade-off between different forms of support. It should also be noted that specific institutions take a broader view on family benefits, displaying higher amounts of spending<sup>19</sup>.

### I HORIZONTAL OR VERTICAL SOLIDARITY

Behind the notion of 'family policy' lie schemes instituted at different times, designed with different objectives (reducing inequalities and encouraging birth rates) and staying true to various concepts. With this in mind, we can consider family policies (the plural is used to factor in the variety of family models) as "public programmes identifying families as targets for action to be implemented in order to deliver an impact on household resources, the daily lives of children and parents, on domestic sharing and balance, and even on family structures themselves as well as the demographic dynamics of a country"<sup>20</sup>.

**As an example, all EU Member States provide family allowances.** However, there are stark differences in access, funding, calculation and redistribution criteria underpinning these various schemes. Logically, such differences reflect each country's specific preferences and circumstances.

Under some scenarios, emphasis is placed on a horizontal redistribution model; in other words, each parent entitled to child benefits receives the same amount of benefit, irrespective of their income. The aim is to offset differences in living standards between families with children and other households, thereby lending support to birth rates. These systems are based on the idea that **family allowances make it possible to share the burden of children at the societal level**, triggering a redistribution from households without to households with children.

Other scenarios focus on a vertical solidarity mechanism where allowances are exclusively granted to certain parents depending on their income, employment and family status, and additional such factors. With this model, the top priority is to fight poverty.

#### I A POLICY WITH BUDGETARY RESTRICTIONS

**Most countries within the EU make family allowances income-tested.** These include: Spain, Bulgaria, Poland, Italy, Portugal, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Cyprus, Croatia, Denmark, Greece, Malta and France. Approximately ten countries do not provide for means-tested schemes, including Ireland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Germany, Slovakia, Sweden, Austria, Estonia, Finland and Hungary. Some other EU Member States – namely Belgium, Lithuania, the Netherlands and Romania – use a hybrid system. The latter refers to the provision of a universally accessible basic allowance coupled with additional family allowances entitled by some parents because of their professional/family situation and/or their low-income status.

In some circumstances, the severely restricted budgets penalising governments may encourage them to promote means-testing and/or taxation of family benefits. Ambitions to target beneficiaries more closely is a response to ambitions to generate savings.

### III • Contrasting family policies across Member States

#### I THE EU LACKS THE DIRECT COMPETENCIES, BUT IS DEVELOPING COURSES FOR ACTION

Despite the availability of a legal framework for this area in every member state, reviewing family policies is no mean feat. For instance, it is not always easy to compare adopted measures, which may differ from one another and be amended at regular intervals.

National instruments and approaches differ, all the more so considering the EU's lack of direct competencies in family policy. Indeed, each country is free to develop their own targets and approaches. That said, this does not detract from the EU's actions insofar as its resources are capable, which particu-

larly applies to the increasingly fundamental issues of work-life balance and equal opportunities for men and women (parental leave, childcare).

The EU Directive of 20 June 2019 on work-life balance for parents and carers establishes a number of minimum requirements to ensure equal opportunities in the labour market for men and women. As well as a minimum 14-week maternity leave period, it provides for individual rights to paternity leave (minimum ten working days), parental leave (minimum four months) and carer's leave (five working days per year)<sup>21</sup>. The directive must be transposed into law no later than 2 August 2022. Both men and women workers are entitled to parental leave on the birth or adoption of a child, regardless of their contractual status and conditions (part-time, full-time, etc.). Parental leave may be taken by either parent following maternity/paternity leave at any time until the child's eighth birthday, an age limit which may be lower in some countries<sup>22</sup>.

The 2017 Work-Life Balance Initiative provides for a number of non-legislative policy measures to ensure protection against discrimination and dismissal of parents, to encourage a gender-balanced use of family leave, to make better use of EU funds and improve professional care services (childcare, out-of-school care, long-term care), and to remove the economic factors preventing women from entering the labour market or working full-time.

In 2019, a portfolio dedicated to 'Democracy and Demography' was created for the first time in the European Commission (EC) and entrusted to Dubravka Šuica. It includes an analysis of demographic trends aimed at providing the institution with guidance on democracy and demography policies requiring implementation in addition to investments earmarked for infrastructure and services.

#### I SLOW CONVERGENCE ACROSS EUROPE

Within the EU, a consensus is now emerging as to **the legitimacy of public intervention to support families in need and/or designed to increase the birth rate against a difficult demographic backdrop.** Measures are

now prepared by Member States across the board, specifically as support packages for the maternity and early childhood phases (direct or indirect financial assistance, childcare facilities for mothers to carry on working). We can demonstrate this with a few examples<sup>23</sup>.

Traditionally, Belgium and France have developed a policy which encourages an increase in the birth rate. In France, almost twenty benefits are granted to families with children aged under 20. And nearly all such benefits are means-tested. Family allowances are paid to all parents with at least two children, with three different income-tested amounts.

For many years, Italy, Portugal and Spain refused to publicly invest in the promotion of a family policy referring to their years of dictatorship before realising that they were facing a demographic emergency. In the case of Spain, families with one or more dependent children aged under 18 are entitled to family allowances for each child, which are paid biannually. The annual amount is calculated from the number of dependent children and parents' income. An additional amount is paid to the most disenfranchised families, again calculated on income and number of household persons. **Effective since March 2022, families in Italy benefit from their first-ever, comprehensive universal allowance package** consisting of a monthly cheque for each child until the age of 21, which is income-tested. This measure was adopted as part of the country's *Family Act* passed in June 2020, providing an action plan to encourage birth rate increases.

As for northern EU countries, family policy is both extremely structured and supported by a clear willingness to make life easier for working parents and to ensure equal opportunities for men and women. In the Netherlands, family allowances are paid on a quarterly basis and are not means-tested from the first child onwards until the age of 18. The amount is paid as a lump sum and is based on children's age. In Sweden, family allowances are paid from the first child onwards up to the age of 16 and are not income-tested. They are paid after the age of 16 for children who have not completed secondary education.

For an extended period, Germany has not actively developed its family policy. From now on, family allowances are not means-tested and paid from the first child onwards; they are either provided as an exemption from income tax or directly from the *Familienkasse* for taxable persons. An allowance increase is applied under certain conditions below a specific level of income.

In Central and Eastern European countries, demographic concerns have prompted leaders to promote a proactive family policy. This is especially relevant for Hungary where, in recent years, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán has taken several measures aimed at increasing the birth rate. The same can be said of Poland where the main objectives of means-tested public family support policies centre on an increase in the fertility rate (still low to date) and an improvement in family living conditions.

In an article published in the January 2022 issue of the *Grand Continent* journal<sup>24</sup>, the Bulgarian political scientist, Ivan Krastev, focuses on the role of demographic projections in stirring public sentiments. In his article, Krastev argues that Post-Covid European politics is now structured into two apocalyptic imaginations: the ecological imagination, triggered by the prospect of an impending ecological disaster, and the demographic imagination, driven by the fear that "my people" will disappear and our way of life will be destroyed. Krastev believes that the ecological imagination is what shapes the politics of Western Europe whereas the demographic imagination shapes Eastern European politics. As a result, the debate on the future of the EU is now a contest between those who want to "save Life" and those who want to save "our way of life".

#### DIFFICULTIES ASSESSING THE IMPACT ON DEMOGRAPHICS

Family policies may pursue different objectives, whether to offset the cost of raising a child, promote women in the workplace, champion equal opportunities for men and women through schemes such as parental leave or to help those with the lowest income.

It is difficult to link fertility rates to public intervention and hence to accurately assess the impact of public policy on demographics. This difficulty can be interpreted in multiple ways: the lack of comprehensive studies for assessing the impact of the complex range of family policy measures; the time lag between policy choices and their effects on the birth rate; the diverse factors influencing the decision to have a child (desire for a child, stability of the couple, having a job and owning a home, etc.); the vast scope of intervention for birth support policies which extend beyond the rigid framework of family benefits (economic, housing and education policies, etc.).

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that countries such as France and Sweden –with their incentive-based family policies– generally record higher fertility rates than countries with more underdeveloped approaches. It would appear that France’s family support policy (family quotient system applied to taxation policy calculated by dividing family income by the number of household “units”, family allowances and childcare benefits) contributes as a whole to sustaining one of the highest fertility rates in Europe despite the reconsideration in 2014 of universally granting family allowances without income-testing, to serve a greater social purpose.

## • Conclusion

The latest statistics published by Eurostat<sup>25</sup> illustrate a decrease in the EU’s population in 2021 for the second year running, registering a decline of more than 656,000 since January 2020. The number of deaths in the EU started to exceed the number of births a

decade ago, but unlike previous periods in history, immigration from non-EU countries has not covered the gap since the beginning of the pandemic. In light of the pandemic, ageing and fertility rates, deaths could continue to outnumber births; in such a scenario, the EU’s demographic development is likely to depend largely on net migration.

A declining birth rate in the EU could have multiple negative consequences from a social, economic and geopolitical perspective: low growth, a decrease in the working-age population causing labour shortages (which, on the positive side, means a less pressured labour market), a reduced tendency to innovate, an increase in age-related expenditure for an ageing population, pension financing pressures (with a pay-as-you-go system that must adapt), and economic and strategic downgrading. According to the European Commission, by 2070, the EU-27 will account for barely 4% of the global population, compared with 12% in 1960<sup>26</sup>. Long term, the demographic situation may represent a considerable challenge for the EU-27, despite the fact that a declining birth rate affects many parts of the world, including emerging countries<sup>27</sup>. It is therefore crucial that Member States place this issue at the top of their agendas. The EU must not rest on its laurels; it must act now. Notwithstanding its lack of core expertise in the area and factoring in the magnitude of the collective task at hand, the ideal scenario would be for the EU to define its courses for action, as it did for health in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Parallel to a declining birth rate is the issue of Europe’s ability to defend its values, along with its socio-economic model and its place in the world. •

## • Notes de fin

- <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/edn-20200711-1?etrans=fr>
- Eurostat’s population projections result from a set of assumptions on future developments for fertility, mortality and net migration. Given the intrinsic uncertainty of future population dynamics, such results should be interpreted as only one of a range of possible demographic developments, and not as forecasts.
- <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/digpub/demography/bloc-2a.html?lang=en&etrans=fr>
- <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tps00204/default/table>  
Eurostat published still provisional figures for 2021 on 11 July 2022.
- The crude birth rate* is the ratio of the number of live births during the year to the average population in that year. The value is expressed per 1,000 persons (Eurostat definition). The number of births is the product of two independent factors: the number of women of childbearing age and their propensity to have children.
- <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tps00204/default/table>

Eurostat published still provisional figures for 2021 on 11 July 2022.

- 7 The total fertility rate measures the mean number of live children who would be born to a woman during her lifetime, if age-specific fertility rates in a given year remained unchanged (Eurostat definition). As such, it is a synthetic measure of fertility. The fertility rate is the average number of children born alive to a woman at current fertility rates.
- 8 <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tps00199/default/table>
- 9 A generation ensures its replacement if the number of girls in the children's generation is equal to the number of women in the parents' generation. Factoring in low infant mortality and the fact that 105 boys are born for every 100 girls, the replacement level in developed countries is achieved when women have about 2.1 children.
- 10 <https://www.ined.fr/fr/publications/editions/population-et-societes/france-fecondite-plus-elevee-europe/>
- 11 Since 2014 – and even since 2010 if we exclude 2014 – France has seen a steady decline in the number of births, now considerably below 800,000 per year. In 2020, 736,000 children were born, the lowest number since 1945. Although the number of births started to rise again in 2021, the fertility rate is still significantly below the levels of a few years ago (2.02 in 2010). Despite this, France is the country which in absolute terms contributes the most to EU demographic dynamics. <https://www.cairn.info/revue-population-2021-4-page-577.htm>
- 12 <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tps00199/default/table>
- 13 <https://www.cairn.info/revue-population-et-societes-2019-6-page-1.htm>
- 14 *Les politiques familiales (Family policies)*. Julien Damon. 2nd edition 2018, Que sais-je ? collection.
- 15 <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tps00017/default/table>  
<https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?lang=en&SubSessionId=f30d337a-d065-424f-a479-clacce98e0f8&themetreeid=21>
- 16 <https://www.lefigaro.fr/vox/societe/le-probleme-le-plus-grave-de-l-italie-est-l-effondrement-de-la-natalite-20210219>
- 17 [https://www.oecd.org/els/family/PF1\\_1\\_Public\\_spending\\_on\\_family\\_benefits.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/els/family/PF1_1_Public_spending_on_family_benefits.pdf)
- 18 <https://data.oecd.org/socialexp/family-benefits-public-spending.htm>
- 19 [https://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=spr\\_exp\\_ffa&lang=fr](https://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=spr_exp_ffa&lang=fr)
- 20 Julien Damon, see above.
- 21 See IJD infographic on parental leave in the EU, July 2022.  
<https://institutdelors.eu/en/publications/conges-pour-les-parents-dans-lue/>
- 22 [https://www.oecd.org/els/family/PF2\\_1\\_Parental\\_leave\\_systems.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/els/family/PF2_1_Parental_leave_systems.pdf)
- 23 In France, the CNAF (Caisse nationale d'allocations familiales/National Family Allowances Fund) sought to gain a better understanding of EU country family policies, producing fact sheets for each of the Member States, updated in 2021.  
[https://www.caf.fr/sites/default/files/medias/cnaf/Nous\\_connaitre/International/SelectionEtudesRecherches/PolitiquesFamilialesUE/2021/2021-09\\_PolitiquesFamilialesPaysUE.pdf](https://www.caf.fr/sites/default/files/medias/cnaf/Nous_connaitre/International/SelectionEtudesRecherches/PolitiquesFamilialesUE/2021/2021-09_PolitiquesFamilialesPaysUE.pdf).  
To overcome the difficulties associated with the various ideas in this field, the CNAF decided to base its work on family policy areas that apply to France, even if they are the responsibility of other organisations. Areas include: family benefits, housing benefits, public family services, tax for family situations, maternity-paternity-parental-leave for sick children, and guaranteed minimum revenue for the most disenfranchised families and socially excluded persons.  
<https://www.missoc.org/base-dinformation/base-de-donnees-des-tableaux-comparatifs-missoc/missoc-tableaux-comparatifs-base-de-donnees-resultats/?lang=fr>
- 24 <https://geopolitique.eu/en/2022/01/17/democracy-demography-and-the-east-west-divide-in-europe/>  
In this article, Ivan Krastev also points out that “it is this demographic anxiety of small and shrinking nations that are at the roots of populists' electoral success in Eastern Europe”.
- 25 <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/ddn-20220711-1>  
<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tps00005/default/table>
- 26 [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/new-push-european-democracy/impact-demographic-change-europe\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/new-push-european-democracy/impact-demographic-change-europe_en)
- 27 <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/content/World-Population-Prospects-2022>  
The United Nations (UN) report states that fertility has fallen markedly in recent decades for many countries: today, two-thirds of the global population lives in a country or area where fertility is below 2.1 births per woman. The world's population is projected to reach 8 billion on 15 November 2022, growing to around 8.5 billion in 2030 and 9.7 billion in 2050, reaching a peak of around 10.4 billion people during the 2080s and remaining at that level until 2100. More than half of the projected increase in global population will be concentrated in eight countries: the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines and the United Republic of Tanzania. The population of Sub-Saharan Africa is expected to almost double by 2050 while that of Europe and North America is expected to grow by only 0.4%. India is projected to surpass China as the world's most populous country during 2023.

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