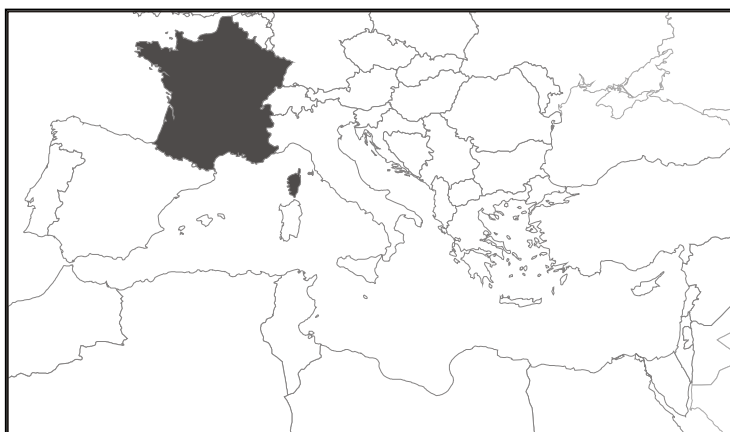


## FRANCE

### Whole country

Metropolitan France has a population of 59.4 million in 2000, making it the most populated of the northern Mediterranean countries. It will comfortably maintain that lead in 2025, accounting for a third (32.6%) of the northern-rim population against 30.9%, 25 years earlier. Despite stable, below-replacement fertility (1.8 children per woman) during the

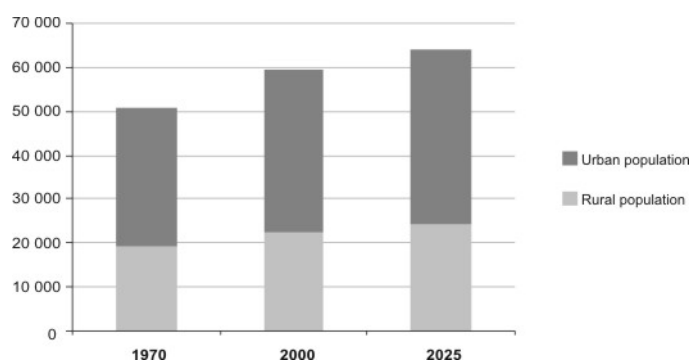


first quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, immigration will keep the French population growing by 8%, adding 4.7 million people between 2000 and 2025. France will be the only EU northern-rim country not experiencing negative population growth up to 2025, when it will reach the 64 million mark.

But its growth has slackened: the 1999 census recorded only 2 million extra people over the 1990 census - an annual rate of increase of 3.8 per thousand, against 5.5 during the preceding inter-census period (1982-1990). This slowdown will continue, with an annual growth rate falling to 2.3 per thousand in 2020-2025. Some of this growth will be immigration-led: the projected net annual immigration of 50 000 people will raise the migration share of overall population growth to approximately 25%.

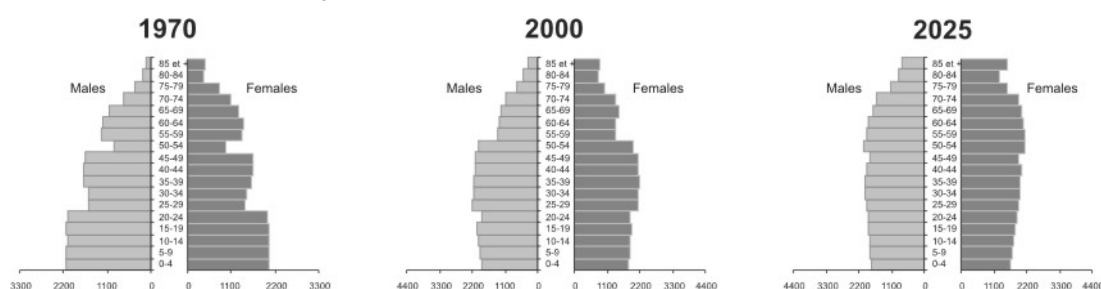
Urbanization will level off in France at approximately 62% of the total population living in urban areas of over 10 000 people between 2000 and 2025. There is as yet no urban-rural migration in France, but the resurgence of interest in the rural surround over the past twenty years will continue: between 2000 and 2025, population growth in rural areas and small localities (under 10 000 people) will slightly outpace that of urban areas of over 10 000 people, at 0.36 and 0.33 per thousand a year. In terms of population numbers, urban areas of over 10 000 people will keep their lead, adding 2.8 million people between 2000 and 2025, against 1.9 million for rural and small urban communities.

**Figure 14. Rural population and urban population 1970-2000-2025 (in thousands)**



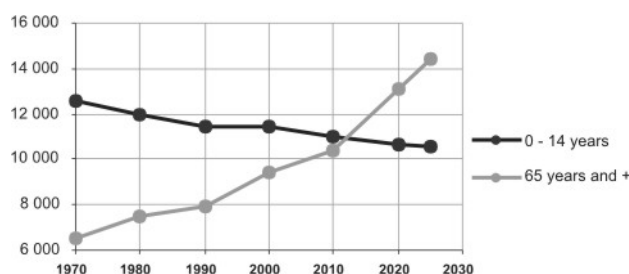
Low fertility and a rising life expectancy will cause the population of France to age still further, as the proportion of older people (ages 65 and over) rises from 15.9% in 2000 to 22.4% in 2025, i.e., nearly a quarter of the total population, and in absolute numbers by over 50%, from 9.4 to 14.4 million. The share of young people aged under 15 will decrease significantly over the period, from 19.2% to 16.5%.

**Figure 15. Population age structure (by 5-year age groups) 1970-2000-2025 (in thousands)**



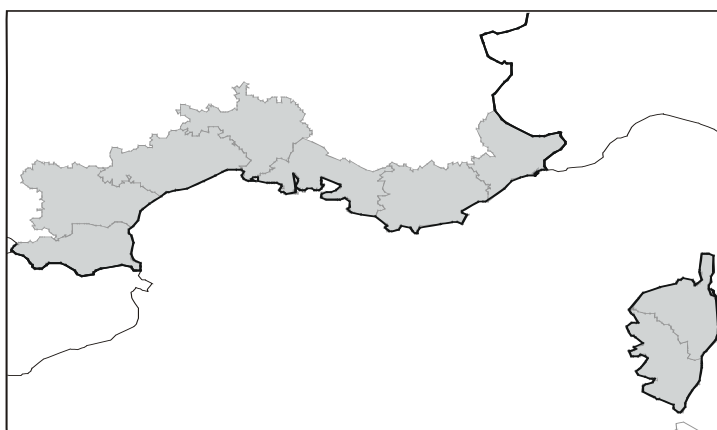
The labour supply will remain in surplus up to 2010, after which it will start to feel the impact of the ageing population, with a near-zero balance of entries to exits in 2015, falling into deficit only from 2020. Stable fertility since the turn of the 1980s and a fairly steady immigration rate will help France defer the onset of its likely labour deficit in strict population terms until around 2015.

**Figure 16. Populations aged 15-and-under and 65-and-over, 1970-2025 (in thousands)**



### Mediterranean coastal regions

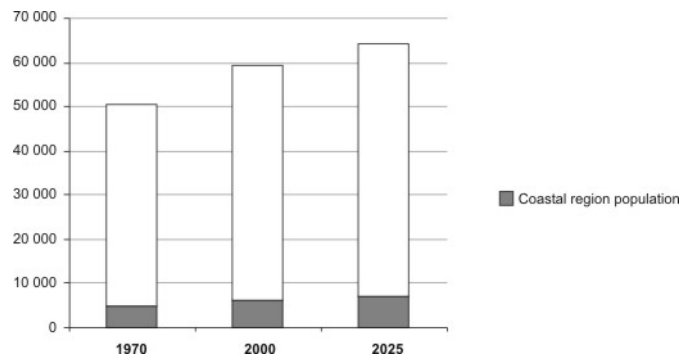
With 6.265 million people in 2000, France's Mediterranean coastal regions hold just over 1/10th of its total population (10.5%). In the 25 years from 1970-1995, the coastal population increased at a mean annual rate of 1.0%, twice that of the rest of the country (0.5%), whence the steady increase in the Mediterranean population from 9.4 to 10.4% between 1970 and 1995.



However, behind this mean rate of growth lie wide disparities between Mediterranean coastal *départements*. To go by their high rates of growth, Var (866 000 people in 1995, mean annual rate of growth 1.7%), Alpes Maritimes (1.002 million, 1.2%) and to a lesser extent Hérault (847 000, 1.3%) have strong immigration pull factors, whereas net immigration to Bouches du Rhône (1.809 million, 0.7%), Gard (606 000, 0.9%) and Aude (306 000, 0.4%), with overall growth near to natural increase, has been small. Corsica has lost population: Haute-Corse (132 000 people in 1995) experienced 0.7% negative growth between 1970 and 1995, while the population of Sud-Corse (125 000 in 1995) flat-lined over the period.

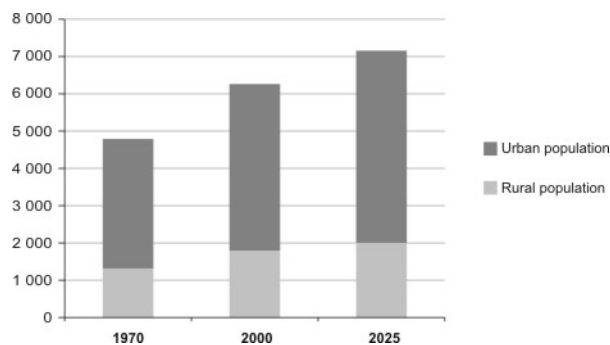
Over the next 25 years, the population of these nine Mediterranean regions will continue to increase in both population size - 6.265 million people in 2000 and 7.151 million in 2025 - and in total population share, rising from 10.5 to 11.1%. At 0.5%, their mean annual rate of growth will continue to outpace the rest-of-country 0.3%.

**Figure 17. Mediterranean coastal regions population as a share of total population 1970-2000-2025 (in thousands)**



The Mediterranean coast has 46 urban areas which had 10 000 or more people at some point in their development. Their aggregate population was 4.363 million people in 1995, against 3.447 million in 1970. The 0.9% mean annual growth rate of these urban areas between 1970-1995 is akin to the aggregate rate of their regions, but nearly twice that of urban areas in the rest of the country: 0.5%.

**Figure 18. Rural and urban population of the Mediterranean coastal regions 1970-2000-2025 (in thousands)**



Only 7 of these 46 urban areas have over 100 000 people and only one tops the million mark - Marseilles (1.226 million in 1995). However, this city's very low population growth between 1970 and 1995 - a period mean annual rate of 0.26% - notwithstanding a negative rate since 1980 (-0.05% a year between 1980 and 1995), suggests significant urban migration. Nice (537 000 people in 1995), by contrast, has made sustained major long-term gains (1.0% a year between 1970 and 1995), exceeded only by that of the Cannes-Antibes-Grasse conurbation (361 000 people, 1.8%), and Montpellier (261 000 people, 1.4%). Perpignan (162 000, 1.0%) is in the average, but Nimes has flat-lined (141 000 people, 0.4%). Finally, the other urban areas of under 100 000 people have exhibited population growth of 1.1% a year over the period 1970-1995. Over the coming 25 years, the population of urban areas of over 10 000 people will increase at a mean annual rate of 0.55% (twice that of urban areas in the rest of the country: 0.26%), rising from 4.490 million in 2000 to 5.153 million in 2025. The coastal urban population share will remain virtually unchanged at about 72.1%.