

Population projections for 2070: an older and most likely smaller population than in 2026

Insee Première • No. 2108 • June 2026



In 2070, if recent demographic trends continued, France would have 65.9 million inhabitants, 3.2 million fewer than in 2026. The population would increase slightly until 2037, reaching 69.8 million inhabitants. This population growth would be entirely due to net migration, as the natural balance turned negative from 2025 onwards. From 2037 onwards, net migration would no longer offset the natural decline, and the population would therefore begin to fall.

By 2070, the number of people under 45 is expected to fall by 8.9 million, whilst the number of those aged 45-64 is expected to remain virtually stable and the number of those aged 65 or over is expected to rise by 5.8 million. The increase in the number of older people is expected to be driven mainly by the rise in the number of those aged 80 or over (+4.6 million); the number of centenarians could quadruple.

By 2040, there would be 49 people aged 65 or over for every 100 people aged 20 to 64, compared with the current 40 per 100 in 2026. Between 2040 and 2070, the trend in this old-age dependency ratio is more uncertain; according to the baseline scenario, it would stand at 62 per 100.

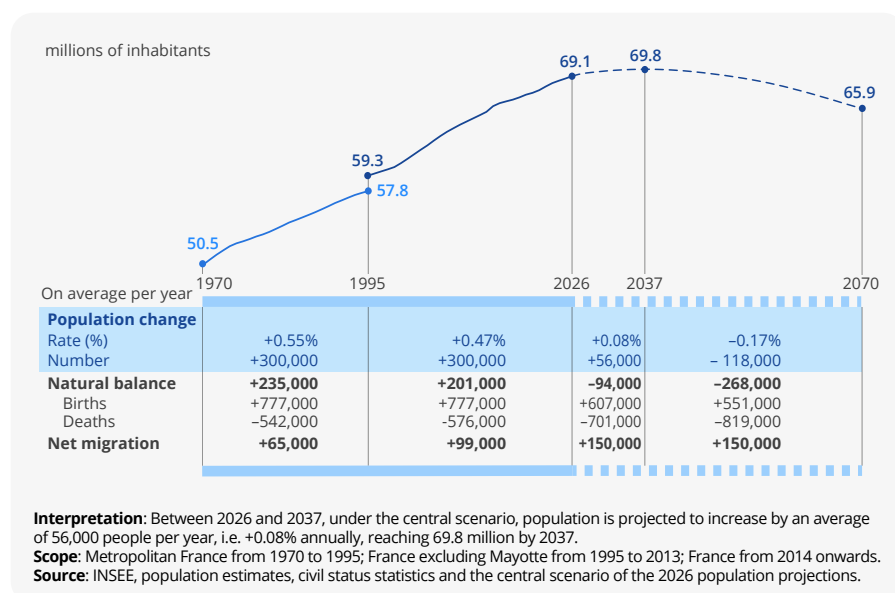
The ageing of the population is certain, but the decline in the total population is only likely: by 2070, there could be between 61 and 71 million people in France, depending on whether the assumptions regarding fertility or net migration are set lower or higher.

If recent demographic trends were to continue, France would have a population of 65.9 million inhabitants in 2070: 3.2 million fewer than in 2026 ► **figure 1**. Under this “central scenario” for population projections, age- and sex-specific mortality rates are projected to keep declining at the same pace as during the 2005–2025 period, excluding the years 2020–2022, which were marked by exceptionally high excess mortality due to COVID. The **total fertility rate (TFR)** continues to decline, stabilising at 1.45 children per woman from 2028 onwards. The **migration balance**, defined as the difference between the number of people entering and leaving the country, is assumed to stand at +150,000 inhabitants per year ► **box**.

The population continues to grow until 2037, reaching 69.8 million. This corresponds to an average increase of 56,000 people per year, or a rate of +0.08%, which is substantially lower than that observed over the past 50 years (around +0.5% per year on average between 1970 and 2026).

This growth is assumed to be entirely driven by a positive migration balance. Indeed, **the natural balance**, which

► 1. Population from 1970 to 2070 under the central scenario



became negative in 2025 [Thélot, 2026], is projected to keep declining until 2070, initially and primarily due to an increase in deaths, and subsequently due to a decline in births ► **figure 2**. Over the course of a century, the natural balance is set to be reversed, falling from +308,000 in 1970 to -343,000 in 2070.

From 2037 onwards, the migration balance no longer offsets the natural decrease. The population is then projected to decline by an average of 118,000 people per year (-0.17% annually), reaching 65.9 million by 2070. France is thus projected to return to a population level close to that recorded in 2014 (66.1 million).

Between 61 and 71 million inhabitants in 2070 depending on fertility and migration assumptions

Several alternative scenarios to the central projection scenario are considered. These correspond to changes in the assumptions concerning fertility, mortality and migration: the three components of the year-on-year change in the number of inhabitants [► sources](#) [► box](#). These scenarios can be used both to account for uncertainty surrounding future demographic trends and to assess the impact of alternative assumptions on future population trends.

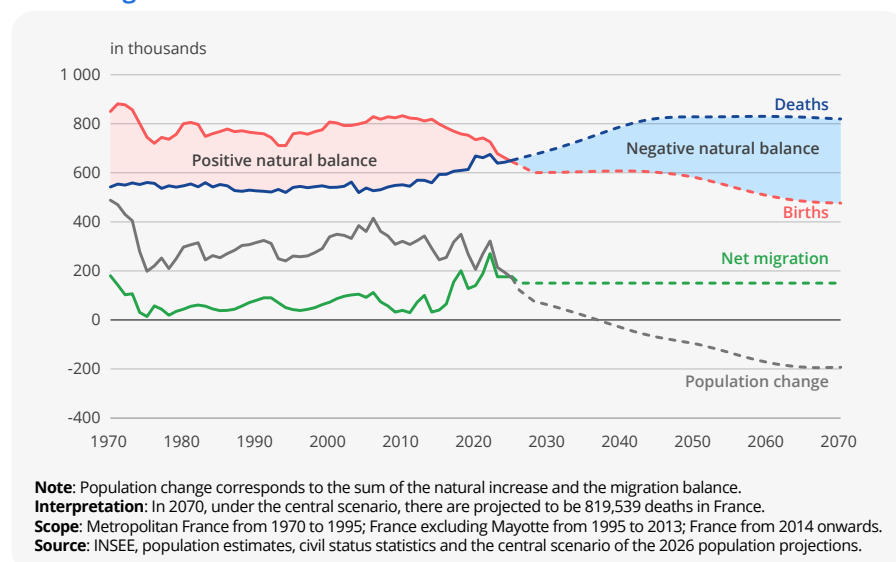
Based on the assumptions adopted, the change in the number of inhabitants in France by 2070 depends primarily on fertility and the migration balance. Holding mortality and migration assumptions at their central values, and assuming high fertility (a TFR of 1.70 children per woman), the population keeps growing until 2052 before declining thereafter. In 2070, the French population stands at 70.8 million, 4.9 million more than under the central scenario [► figure 3](#). Conversely, under a low-fertility assumption (a TFR of 1.20 children per woman), the population begins to decline as early as 2029 and reaches 61.3 million in 2070, 4.6 million fewer than under the central scenario.

Alternative assumptions regarding the migration balance also result in substantial variations in the projected population in 2070, with an impact very similar to that of fertility. The population begins to decline from 2053 under a high migration balance assumption (+230,000 people per year) and from as early as 2028 under a low migration balance assumption (+70,000 people per year). By 2070, the population is projected to vary by approximately ± 5.0 million around the central scenario depending on the migration balance assumption adopted.

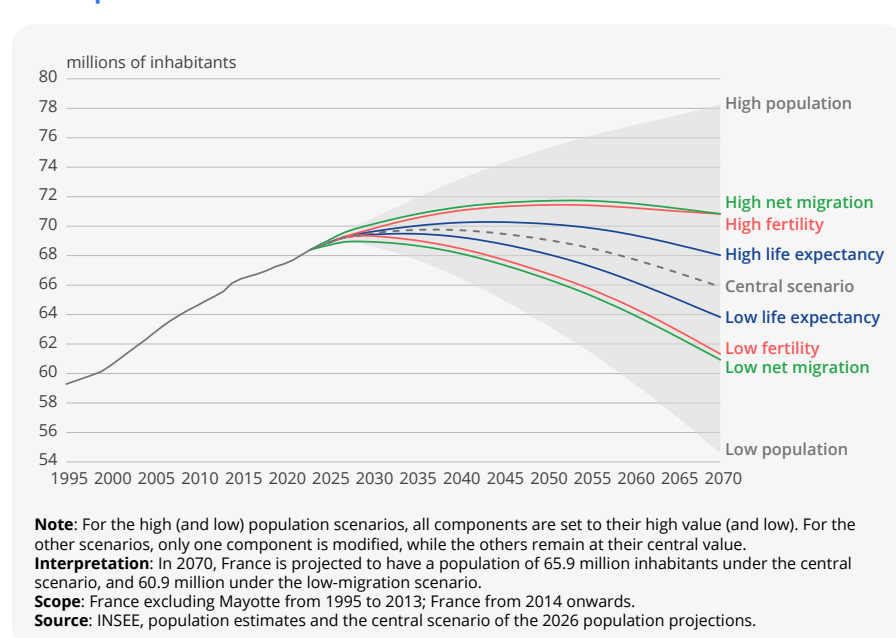
The assumptions adopted regarding **life expectancy**, meanwhile, have a more limited impact on population levels. If life expectancy at birth is three years higher than under the central scenario in 2070, the population starts to decline from 2043; if it is three years lower than under the central scenario in 2070, it starts to decline from 2034. By 2070, the population varies by approximately ± 2.1 million around the central scenario depending on the life expectancy assumption adopted.

If all factors unfavourable to population growth are combined (the "low-population" scenario), the population begins to decline as early as 2027 and stands at 54.6 million in 2070. Conversely, if all factors favourable to demographic growth are combined (the "high-population" scenario), the population increases throughout the period and reaches 78.3 million in 2070. These "extreme"

► 2. Births, deaths, natural increase, migration balance and population change from 1970 to 2070 under the central scenario



► 3. Population from 1995 to 2070 under different scenarios



scenarios therefore differ from the central scenario by -11.2 million and +12.4 million inhabitants respectively in 2070.

By 2070, there are projected to be 8.9 million fewer inhabitants aged under 45

Under the central scenario, the population declines by 3.2 million between 2026 and 2070, and the age structure is profoundly transformed. The number of people aged under 45 falls by 8.9 million, from 36.3 million in 2026 to 27.3 million in 2070 [► figure 4](#) [► figure 5](#).

People aged under 45 in 2070 (born from 2025 onwards) are less numerous than those of the same age in 2026 (born from 1981 onwards), as fertility remains below its past level. This decline

is greater among those aged under 20 (-4.8 million) than among people aged 20 to 44 (-4.1 million). On the one hand, the migration balance offsets a larger share of the decline among those aged 20–44 than among younger people. On the other hand, owing to the decline in fertility over the past ten years and the continuation of low projected fertility, the number of people of childbearing age decreases between 2040 and 2070. Even if fertility rates remain unchanged, this further reduces the number of births by that time horizon [\[Tavan, 2026\]](#). This "snowball effect" transforms the age pyramid into a shape resembling a spinning top, with a particularly pronounced narrowing at its base [\[Pison, 2009\]](#).

The population aged 45 to 64 remains almost stable, at 17.5 million people in both 2026

and 2070. The cohorts in this age group in 2070 were smaller at birth than those of the same age in 2026 (14.9 million people born between 2005 and 2024, compared with 16.4 million born between 1961 and 1980 in metropolitan France), but this decline is offset by the migration balance.

By 2070, there are projected to be 5.8 million more inhabitants aged 65 or over

Under the central scenario, the number of people aged 65 or over increases by 5.8 million between 2026 and 2070, rising from 15.3 million in 2026 to 21.1 million in 2070. In 2026, 22% of the population is aged 65 or over, almost the same proportion as those aged under 20. By 2070, 32% of the population is aged 65 or over, twice the proportion of those aged under 20.

This widening at the top of the age pyramid reflects past and future gains in life expectancy and, to a lesser extent, a positive migration balance. The increase in the older population is driven primarily by growth in the number of people aged 80 or over, whose numbers increase by 4.6 million, compared with 1.2 million amongst those aged 65 to 79. As a result, there are projected to be almost 9 million people aged 80 or over in 2070, compared with 4.3 million in 2026. The significant increase in the number of people aged 80 or over is also explained by the fact that these cohorts are relatively small in 2026, having been born before the baby boom.

The age pyramid becomes more balanced between women and men, particularly at older ages. Consequently, men account for 44% of the population aged 80 or over in 2070, compared with 38% in 2026.

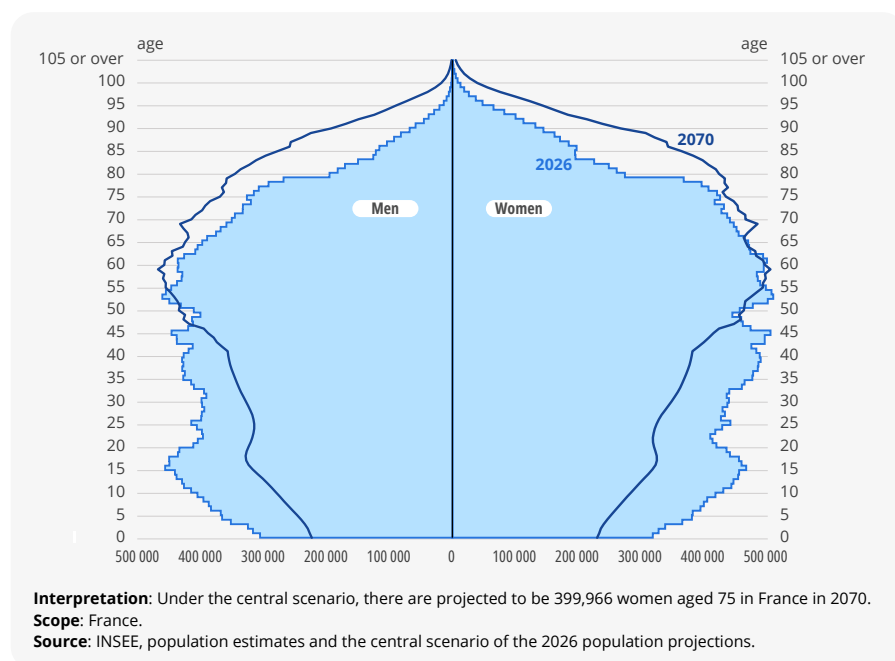
Four times as many centenarians in 2070?

In 2026, the number of centenarians in France is estimated at 37,000. Under

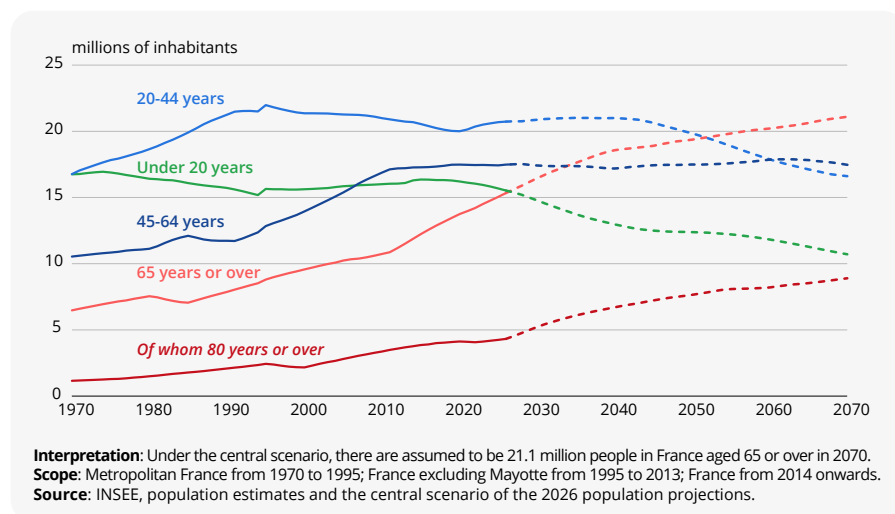
the central scenario, France could have 160,000 centenarians in 2070, i.e. four times as many as in 2026. Nevertheless, centenarians still account for only 0.24% of the population under this scenario, compared with 0.05% in 2026. The

proportion of men among centenarians is expected to double, rising from 15% in 2026 to 30% in 2070. If the increase in life expectancy were to be greater and the migration balance higher than under the central scenario, up to 360,000 centenarians

► 4. Age pyramid in 2026 and 2070 under the central scenario



► 5. Population by age from 1970 to 2070 under the central scenario



► Box – Assumptions used for the 2026 population projections

INSEE produces population projections approximately every five years. As in previous projection exercises, the assumptions used for the 2026 projections were established on the basis of an analysis of recent demographic trends [Blanpain et al., 2026] and the views of a large number of experts [Tavan, 2026]. For this exercise, which extends to 2070, 220 experts were consulted and 84 responded.

Under the central fertility assumption, the total fertility rate (TFR) continues to decline until reaching 1.45 children per woman in 2028 (compared with 1.56 in 2025), before stabilising. The low and high assumptions bracket this central assumption within an interval of ± 0.25 children per woman from 2030 onwards. The mean age at childbirth, which stood at 31.2 years in 2025, continues to increase, reaching 33.0 years in 2050.

The central life expectancy assumption is derived by extending the decline in age- and sex-specific mortality rates at the same pace as over the previous 20 years (excluding the years 2020–2022, which were marked by exceptionally high excess mortality due to COVID). This results in a life expectancy at birth in 2070 of 89.5 years for women (+3.6 years compared with 2025) and 86.7 years for men (+6.4 years compared with 2025). The low and high life expectancy assumptions for 2070 differ from the central assumption by ± 3.0 years.

Finally, the migration balance is assumed to remain constant from 2026 onwards at +150,000 people per year. Given the considerable uncertainty surrounding migration trends, the low and high assumptions are set at $\pm 80,000$ people relative to the central assumption.

The full set of population projection results is available for consultation [Insee, 2026]. The detailed methodology will be published in a working paper [Blanpain et al., forthcoming].

could be living in France in 2070, compared with 90,000 otherwise.

Population ageing is projected to continue

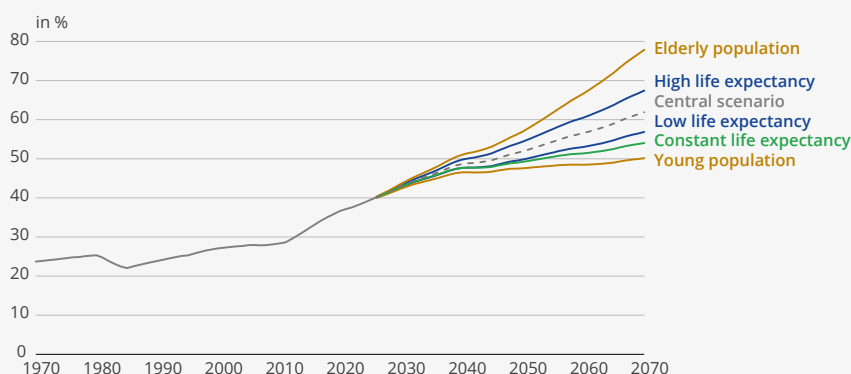
Up to 2040, continued population ageing is inevitable, and its scale is already largely determined. This is because it depends primarily on past developments, namely the gains in life expectancy that have already occurred and the progression

into the 65-and-over age group of the cohorts born at the end of the baby boom (1961–1974), far more so than on future increases in life expectancy. Under the central scenario, the **old-age dependency ratio** rises from 40 people aged 65 or over per 100 people aged 20 to 64 in 2026, to 49 in 2040 ► **figure 6**. Even in scenarios with less pronounced ageing, this ratio increases almost as much by 2040: it reaches 48 under the scenario in which life expectancy remains unchanged from its 2025 level, and 47 under the “young population

scenario”, which combines limited gains in life expectancy with high fertility and a high migration balance. Under the opposite “elderly population scenario”, the old-age dependency ratio in 2040 also remains close to that of the central scenario (51).

Between 2040 and 2070, however, the old-age dependency ratio is more uncertain. The ratio could remain broadly stable under the young population scenario (50 in 2070). Alternatively, it could continue to rise at a somewhat slower pace under the central scenario (62), or increase more rapidly under the elderly population scenario (78). ●

► 6. Old-age dependency ratio from 1970 to 2070 under different scenarios



Note : The elderly population scenario combines the high life expectancy assumption with the low fertility and low migration assumptions. Conversely, the young population scenario combines the low life expectancy assumption with the high fertility and high migration assumptions. For the other scenarios, only one component is modified, while the others remain at their central value.

Interpretation: Under the elderly population scenario, there are projected to be 78 people aged 65 or over for every 100 people aged 20 to 64 in 2070.

Scope: Metropolitan France from 1970 to 1995; France excluding Mayotte from 1995 to 2013; France from 2014 onwards.

Source: INSEE, population estimates and the central scenario of the 2026 population projections.

► Definitions

The **total fertility rate** 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.

The **net migration** is the difference between the number of persons having entered the territory and the number of persons having left the territory in the course of the year. This concept is independent of nationality.

The **natural balance** (or natural increase) is the difference between the number of births and the number of deaths recorded over a period. The words “surplus” or “increase” can be used when the number of births is greater than that of deaths.

Life expectancy at birth represents the average life span of a fictitious generation subject to the age-specific mortality conditions of the year.

The **old-age dependency ratio** is the number of individuals aged 65 or older per 100 people of working age, defined as those aged between 20 to 64 years old.

► Sources

Population projections estimate the population by sex and age as at 1st January of each year in France. The method used is the “cohort-component method”, under which the three components of population change – fertility, mortality and the migration balance – are projected separately [Tavan, 2026]. On 1st January n+1, the number of inhabitants equals the population on 1st January of year n, plus the natural increase and the migration balance for the year n. The assumptions for each component are determined on the basis of recent demographic trends and expert consultation. To account for uncertainty, three values are adopted for each component: the “central” assumption, while far from certain, is considered the most likely. It is bounded by a low and high assumption. This produces a set of 27 scenarios. The central scenario is the one in which all three components are set at their central values. Furthermore, population projections are not forecasts. Instead, they provide a coherent and shared analytical framework to enable the exploration of various possible futures.

The starting point for the 2026 projections is the latest definitive population estimate, namely the population as at 1st January 2023. The central scenario incorporates the estimates from the demographic balance covering the period from 1st January 2024 to 1st January 2026 [Thélot, 2026]. Beyond that date and up to 1st January 2070, the population figures are projected.

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For more information look at the
downloads available on insee.fr

► For further information

- **Blanpain N., Pointet J., Thélot H.**, « Projections de population 2026 pour la France: méthode et hypothèses », Working paper, forthcoming.
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- **Blanpain N., Pariset C., Pointet J., Thélot H.**, « [Les projections de population 2026: Comment les évolutions démographiques récentes peuvent éclairer le choix des hypothèses](#) », April 2026.
- **Tavan C.**, « [Actualisation des projections de la population en France à l'horizon 2070: quelles hypothèses retenir](#) », le blog de l'Insee, April 2026.
- **Thélot H.**, « [Bilan démographique 2025 – En 2025, le solde naturel en France est négatif pour la première fois depuis la fin de la Seconde Guerre mondiale](#) », Insee Première No. 2087, January 2026.
- **Pison G.**, « [Le vieillissement démographique sera plus rapide au Sud qu'au Nord](#) », Population & Sociétés No. 457, June 2009.

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