

Infos migrations

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The quality of life of non-native residents



Non-native residents of France more frequently declare difficulties in several areas that contribute to the quality of life. They less frequently declare that they have a high level of well-being. As regards their employment, they feel rather more exposed to difficult work conditions. A considerable part of the differences between them and the majority of the population is due to socio-demographic features that are less favourable to people born outside France.

Beyond « GDP per capita », it is important to measure the « quality of life » by looking at other factors. The studies based on the « quality of life » survey (see [1] or [2] and Insert 2) show that it is appropriate to focus on seven factors that cover different elements of people's lives. Financial constraints are due to aspects linked to income. It is also useful to focus on the quality of housing and the environment surrounding people's homes. The quality of life also depends on one's health. Two health factors are used: physical health and emotional well-being. Lastly, two more factors complete this spectrum to understand the level of social integration: an evaluation of social links (family, friends ...) and trust in institutions.

The quality of life of non-native residents is lower

For each of the factors to be considered, a binary indicator has been introduced. This enables us to distinguish those people who are most disadvantaged (about a tenth of the total). The ensuing analyses sort the people born outside France into four groups of countries (**Insert 1**). Emphasis is placed on the countries that have been or still are significant source countries for immigrants. The first group is made up of Italy, Portugal and Spain. The second group covers the countries with a very high human development index (HDI) - other than the three countries in the first group. The third group consists of the Maghreb countries, and the last group is made up of the rest of the world.

Non-native residents of France have apparently a lower quality of life than French-born residents (**Figure**). People born in Europe, North America, Japan or in another country with a very high HDI are in situations similar to those of French natives. However, more of them declare difficulties as to the quality of their housing and their surroundings. To a lesser extent, they experience a lack of social links more frequently than the French residents. People born in Italy, Portugal or Spain are about twice as numerous in declaring difficulties, whatever the factor involved. In fact, for emotional health problems, this ratio is equal to 2.7.

For those born outside France, their housing in itself or their surroundings are more frequently problematic: twice as many people born outside France declare that they have problems with these aspects, compared to people born in France. This same proportion is also to be seen in health factors for people born in the Maghreb countries. The physical health problems they declare are comparable to those of people born in France or in countries other than the top six main source countries of immigrants. In fact the people born in these six countries are concerned twice as often.

Insert 1: Geographic breakdown

Firstly, people born in a country with an HDI rated as « very high » in 2011: these are mainly countries of Western Europe (EU 27, except for some countries in the east of Europe), North America, Australia and Japan. In all, these amount to a little less than 50 countries. The HDI is based on GDP per capita, life expectancy and access to education. Among these highly developed countries, we pick out the « long-standing » source countries of migrants to France: Italy, Portugal and Spain. These countries have developed more recently and the migrants left them when their economies were less advanced: they are thus in an intermediary position. The other countries, representing the large majority, have been grouped together, but the Maghreb countries are kept separate from the rest.

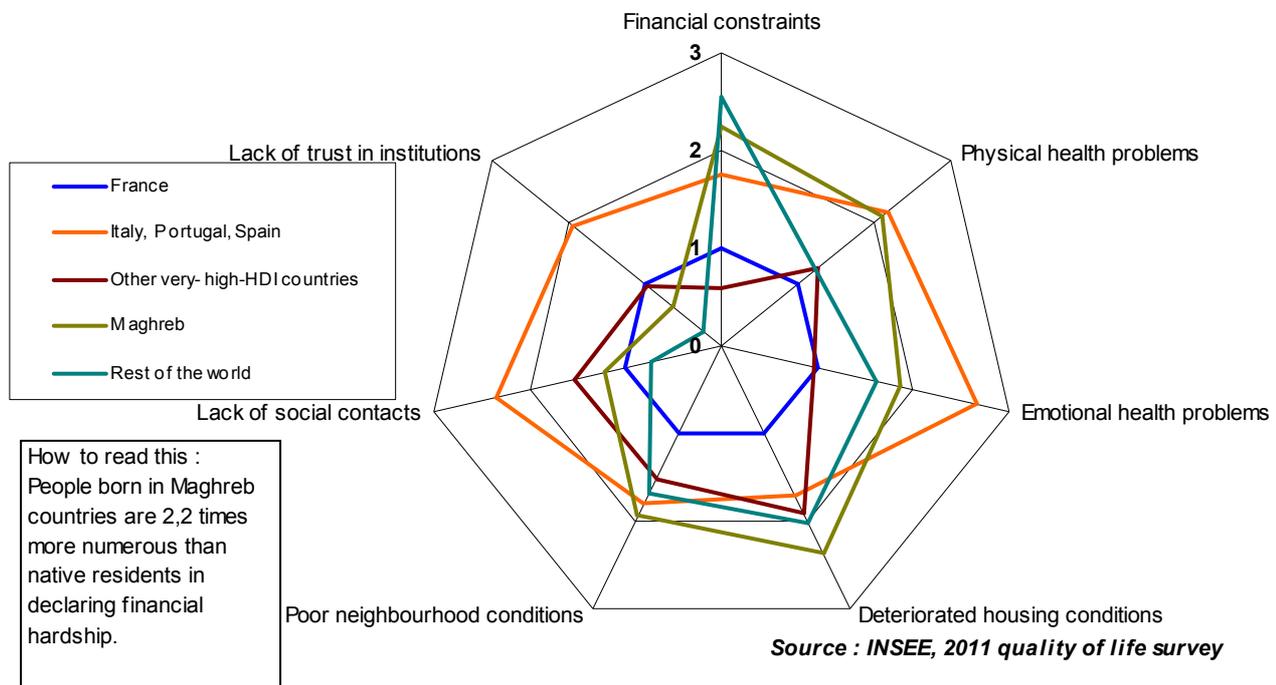
People born in a country where the HDI is not very high are slightly less numerous in experiencing the lack of social contacts, and they are distinctly less numerous in not trusting institutions as much as people who were born in France. Conversely, non-native residents feel financial constraints twice as frequently as people born in France, provided that they were not born in a high-HDI country.



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Figure : comparison of quality of life-indicators, according to their place of birth



Field: Continental France, people aged 18 years or more, living in normal households (not in institutions).

This gap is primarily due to their age and standard of living rather than their origin

The general analysis showed the influence of individual or « household » features. Thus, income is often an important factor. However the geographical location (or the size of the urban unit) and the composition of the household also play a part. Age and level of educational qualification separate people clearly along certain factors. The fact of being a man or a woman is less significant. In fact, these characteristics are not correlated to the place of birth. Non-native residents of France are more frequently in less favourable situations. In the end, the fact of being born outside France as against being born in France, is not specifically a marked differential factor.

The people born in Italy, Portugal and Spain are in the older age groups (**Table 1**). They also have an average level of education that is rather low; they live in households made up of adults; women are over-represented. Their standard of living is slightly lower than the median, but they are not over-represented amongst the fifth of the population that is least favoured in this respect. People with the same characteristics, but born in France, are equally twice as numerous in declaring difficulties in most dimensions of quality of life. There remains an « unexplained » effect that operates in the areas of emotional health problems and housing conditions.

People born outside France are over-represented in urban areas with more than 200 000 inhabitants: this fact partly explains why they are numerous in declaring difficulties in terms of the size of their living quarters and the quality of their surroundings. This is also true of people born in a very-high-HDI country. These people are also a little more frequently in single-adult households, a fact that can be linked to the declared difficulties in the social contacts sector.

The people born in countries of the Maghreb are, on average, quite old. In fact, on the one hand, immigration of Algerians from Algeria started in the 1950s, and on the other hand, a number of these people born in the Maghreb countries are French nationals that came back to France at the beginning of the 1960s. Their standard of living is quite low: this explains a fair part of the over-representation amongst people declaring financial constraints. People born in the other countries (apart from those with high HDIs) have similar characteristics. The distribution following the different factors mirrors this. There are, however, some differences: due to the fact that they are older, the people born in the Maghreb countries are obviously in a poorer state of health. This is reflected in their declarations on these factors.

Lower perception of well-being

The well-being perceived has an average value of 6.8 on a scale from 0 to 10 (for all people aged 18 years and over). This is close to that observed in the statistical survey on incomes and living conditions (Survey on incomes and living conditions, *SILC*, 2010 [**2**]). Just over one fifth of the population (21 %) give themselves a mark less than or equal to 5.

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This percentage is very different depending on whether the subjects are born in France or a very-high-HDI country, on the one hand, or in other countries (including Italy, Portugal and Spain) on the other hand. In the first group, it is 19 % as against 33 % in the second. The individual factors and those of the household are correlated with the following declaration: men or people aged between 35 and 64 more frequently declare a lower level of well-being. However, the most significant factors are having a low level of educational attainment and having a low income. These two characteristics are thus to be compared with the larger part of people born outside France that report a low level of well-being. There is a strong relationship between well-being and the lack of difficulties in terms of financial constraints, health (physical and emotional) and social contacts. In the end, the fact of being born outside France is not in itself a factor that leads people to declare a low level of well-being.

Table 1: Characteristics of people according to their place of birth

Breakdown (in %) by place of birth and characteristics		France	Italy, Portugal, Spain	Other very-high-HDI countries	Maghreb	Rest of the world
Gender	Female	52	60	50	51	55
	Male	48	40	50	49	45
Age	18-34 years	27	7	22	14	31
	35-49 years	28	18	32	21	34
	50-64 years	24	29	30	38	28
	65 years or over	21	46	16	27	8
Educational qualification	None or did compulsory school cursus	26	70	33	47	43
	High-school diploma or equivalent	31	17	25	22	26
	Short tertiary education course	18	5	24	17	12
	Bachelor degree or higher	25	8	18	13	19
Composition of household	Person living alone	27	21	34	21	26
	Single parent and one or more children	6	8	2	4	2
	At least two adults, no children	42	66	43	41	40
	Others	25	5	21	34	32
Size of urban unit	Less than 5 000 inhabitants	33	27	25	3	9
	From 5 000 to 199 999 inhabitants	31	32	26	29	24
	From 200 000 to 1 999 999 inhabitants	22	20	21	37	30
	Grand Paris	14	21	29	30	37
Income	The 20 % with the lowest income	18	17	23	44	50
	Between the 20th percentile and the median	30	49	26	22	24
	Between the median and the 80th percentile	31	20	19	19	13
	The 20 % with the highest income	21	13	31	15	13
Gender and labour force status	Male, not active	21	27	21	25	21
	Male, active	27	13	29	24	24
	Female, not active	26	35	32	23	25
	Female, active	27	25	18	28	31
	Activity rate of females aged 18 to 64	66	75	44	70	57
	Activity rate of males aged 18 to 64	69	63	67	72	60
Total numbers (in millions)		42,02	1,14	0,87	2,35	1,83

Field: Continental France, people aged 18 years or more, living in normal households (not in institutions).

Source: INSEE, 2011 quality of life survey and 2009 population census for the distribution by place of birth.

Non-native residents of France are more exposed to unemployment

For people between 18 and 64 years old, a first binary indicator distinguishes people out of work or those that fear being out of work in the next six months (14 %) from the rest. The differences by place of birth are substantial (**Table 2**). They are not explained only by the differences in educational-qualification levels. The majority of non-native residents in this age group are immigrants (i.e. people with foreign citizenship born outside France).

The psycho-social risks declared also depend on the place of birth

The labour force participation rate, the employment rate, the distribution by business sector, occupation or level of educational qualification has been analysed in detail elsewhere [**3 and 4**]. Thus immigrants work in specific business sectors their occupations require lower educational attainment, therefore their income is lower. The proportion of people who declare difficulties varies widely according to the indicators of psycho-social risks. Thus lack of autonomy and lack of recognition at work are frequently cited, whereas less weight is given to not being able to do quality work (ethical unease) or having to compromise on family responsibilities because of work. Differences by gender highlight emotional difficulties for the women, (« what we see at work is difficult to bear ») but fewer risks (« dangerous work conditions ») probably due to their business sector.

People born in the six main source countries of immigration are quite close (for these indicators). Lack of autonomy and lack of recognition are still more frequently evoked, but also the difficulty to concentrate on work because of family constraints. People from lower-HDI countries give more emphasis to having to deal with « things that are difficult to bear » (emotional suffering). They find it more difficult to reconcile work and family life. Lastly, people born in very-high-HDI countries are different: it is not the lack of autonomy or recognition that is emphasised, but rather ethical unease.

Table 2: Psycho-social risks according to place of birth

	France	Italy, Portugal, Spain	Other very-high-HDI countries	Maghreb	Rest of the world	Factors most closely matched
Unemployment or risk of unemployment	1/8	=	=	++	+	Financial constraints
Work...						
... too stressful	1/2	+	-	-	+	Emotional health problems, physical health problems
... pace is too fast (deadlines...)	1/5	=	=	=	=	Physical health problems
... with emotional requirements	1/2	=	=	=	+	Poor neighbourhood conditions
... lack of autonomy	4/5	+	--	+	=	Emotional health problems
... with ethical unease	1/5	-	+	=	=	Physical health problems, lack of trust in political institutions
... poorly rewarded (badly paid)	2/3	++	--	+	=	Financial constraints, emotional and physical health problems
... in dangerous conditions	1/4	=	=	=	-	Financial constraints, deteriorated housing conditions
Reconciling work and family life						
... housework penalised (physical stress)	1/2	=	-	=	+	Financial constraints, emotional and physical health problems
... family responsibilities penalised (psychic stress)	1/4	=	+	=	+	Financial constraints, emotional and physical health problems
... work penalised because of family responsibilities	1/3	+	=	+	+	Financial constraints, emotional and physical health problems and deteriorated housing conditions

How to read this: On person in eight (of those born in France) is out of work or fears being out of work within the next six months. This proportion reaches 33 % for people born in the Maghreb countries. This risk is strongly associated with the factor « financial constraints ».

Field: Continental France, people between 18 and 64 years old, living in normal households (not in institutions), economically active (except for line 1: economically active or not). Source: INSEE, 2011 quality of life survey.

Non-native residents of France more frequently declare difficulties in quality of life-areas, well being and risks at work. It is not because of their place of birth but because they share characteristics such as gender, age, educational attainment, income, housing condition with other residents also declaring difficulties.

Insert 2: source and indicators

One of the recommendations of the report on the measurement of economic performance and social progress, published by the Commission chaired by Professor Stiglitz, is to improve the measurement of quality of life, so as not to focus too closely on a single indicator, notably the GDP. INSEE carried out the quality of life survey in 2011 in order to consider most of the factors of quality of life identified in the Stiglitz report. This survey questioned 3 247 people using innovative methodologies (sample population constructed from tax-return databases, answers gathered via Internet). It enabled researchers to distinguish people born in France from people born abroad. The indicators are the same as both publications [1] and [2] apart from « deteriorated neighbourhood of housing unit » that includes in the indicator of the environment the sub-indicator of fear of crime in the neighbourhood. See [2] for example.

To find out more:

1. Amiel, Godefroy et Lollivier: *France Portrait Social 2012, Les personnes modestes en milieu urbain sont celles qui cumulent le plus de difficultés en matière de qualité de vie*
2. Amiel, Godefroy et Lollivier: *INSEE première n° 1428, 2012, Qualité de vie et bien-être vont souvent de pair*
3. Infos migrations (DSED): N°: 39-45-46-48-50-51 focus on these issues. See <http://www.immigration.interieur.gouv.fr/Info-ressources/Documentation/Publications>
4. *INSEE références: Immigrés et descendants d'immigrés, octobre 2012, chapitre 4*