

EXPANSION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Luciano Petrioli

March 2004

With the entry of 10 new countries into the European Union, which will occur in May 2004, the relative population will increase from the current 380.8 to 456.2 million inhabitants. These, according to the data of 1-1-2004 ⁽¹⁾, will be distributed in decreasing order among the various member countries in the following measure:

| Country | Population (in millions) | Percentage distribution | Country | Population (in millions) | Percentage distribution |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Germany | 82.5 | 18.1 | Austria | 8.1 | 1.8 |
| France | 59.9 | 13.1 | Denmark | 5.4 | 1.2 |
| United Kingdom | 59.5 | 13.0 | Slovakia | 5.4 | 1.2 |
| Italy | 57.5 | 12.6 | Finland | 5.2 | 1.1 |
| Spain | 42.3 | 9.3 | Ireland | 4.0 | 0.9 |
| Poland | 38.2 | 8.4 | Lithuania | 3.4 | 0.7 |
| Netherlands | 16.3 | 3.6 | Latvia | 2.3 | 0.5 |
| Greece | 11.0 | 2.4 | Slovenia | 2.0 | 0.4 |
| Portugal | 10.5 | 2.3 | Estonia | 1.4 | 0.3 |
| Belgium | 10.4 | 2.3 | Cyprus (a) | 0.7 | 0.2 |
| Czech Rep. | 10.2 | 2.2 | Luxembourg | 0.5 | 0.1 |
| Hungary | 10.1 | 2.2 | Malta | 0.4 | 0.1 |
| Sweden | 9.0 | 2.0 | ===== | ===== | ===== |
| | | | Total | 456.2 | 100.0 |

(a) Not counting the inhabitants of the Turkish zone.

These are 25 countries which are notably different in quantity: only 6 of them (Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, and Poland) make up 75 percent of the entire population of the Union. The other 25 per 100 is distributed among 19 countries, eight of which have a number of inhabitants lower than 5 million.

If this aspect has a certain importance regarding the World, the population of the Union represents 5 out of 100 but, for that indicated by the projections for the next decades, this value is destined to decrease due to the inverse tendency that will manifest in countries, such as China and India, that have already reached around 2.5 billion inhabitants, as they are expected to surpass 3 billion between 2030 and 2050.

In any case, the population of the European Union will remain, although little represented, at third place in the rating after China and India, followed by the United States of America and a group of countries with more than 200 million people (in the projections to 2050), including Pakistan, Indonesia, Brazil, Nigeria and Bangladesh.

(1) Sources of data: the European Demographic Observatory and Eurostat.