

FRANCE

Statistical Profile

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INTRODUCTION TO FRANCE



About this Statistical Profile

Organizations striving to be employers-of-choice in different countries around the world need access to current information about the economic, social, political, and demographic characteristics of the countries where their employees live and work.

The Country Profile Series focuses on statistics that can guide decision-making at the workplace: workforce highlights, economic highlights, and population highlights. This Country Profile is part of a set of resources about France available on the website of the Global Perspectives Institute: www.bc.edu/agingandwork.

France is located in Western Europe, with its borders stretching from the English Channel to the Mediterranean. The total area of France is approximately 675,417 km², including overseas territories. It is often referred to as The Hexagon because of the geometric shape of its territory. Paris is the nation's capital. As of 2009, the population is estimated to be 64.3 million,¹ while total fertility rate (TFR) stands at 2 children per woman,¹ with a population growth rate of 0.549%.²

The primary language is French, with a number of regional dialects such as Breton, Provençal, and Catalan still in existence. Because of colonization, French is spoken in parts of Canada, African countries, the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific.

French people are attached to the Republic and to the spirit of the “Lumières.” The President is directly elected by universal suffrage and maintains overall responsibility in foreign affairs and defense, while the Prime Minister is responsible for day-to-day government. Parliament is divided into the National Assembly and the Senate, with members of the National Assembly directly elected every five years, and members of the Senate chosen by an electoral college.

Freedom, equality and fraternity are core values that translate into a Welfare State and citizens' expectations towards public provisions, a redistributive tax system, an inclusive healthcare system and a high-quality education system (subsidized daycare, and free public school starting at the age of 3). France is also a highly centralized country with elites governing from Paris.

France is a secular country. According to polls, 51% identify as being Catholics, about 30% as being agnostics or atheists, 10% from other religions or without opinion, 4% as Muslim, 3% as Protestant, 1% as Buddhist and 1% as Jewish. Laïcité, or separation between Church and state, is an important concept; the French government does not recognize any religion and religious organizations are not allowed to intervene in policy-making.

France possesses the fifth largest economy by nominal GDP. Currently France is a founding member of the European Union and the United Nations, as well as a member of the G8, G20, NATO, OECD, and WTO. Together with four other countries, France is a member of the UN Security Council. The official currency of France is the euro.³

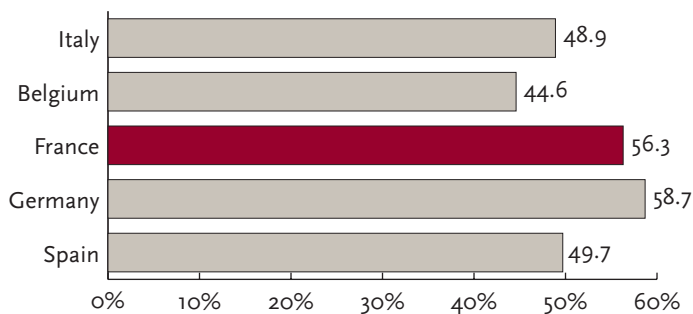
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LABOR FORCE HIGHLIGHTS

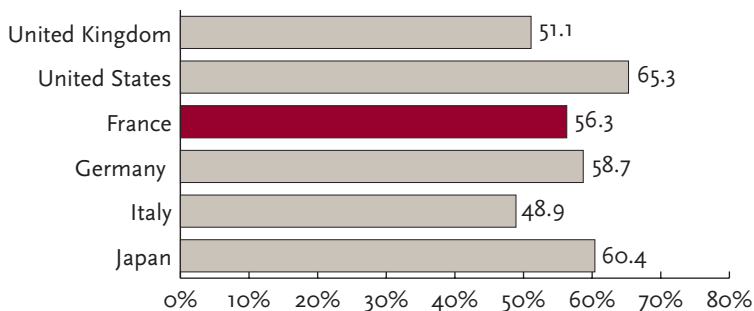
- 🌐 63.9% of the total French population is in the labor force.⁴
- 🌐 The economically active population is projected to increase from 27.9 million in 2007 to 28.1 million in 2020. “Economically active population” comprises all persons of either sex who furnish the supply of labor for the production of goods and services during a specified time reference period.⁴
- 🌐 The unemployment rate in 2007 was 8.3%.⁴
- 🌐 According to the Labour Force Survey by Eurostate, the average hours worked by employees in France in 2008 was 38.4 hours per week. France has the lowest average working hours of all the countries surveyed. In comparison, the average number of hours worked for the EU15 is 39.9 hours.⁵
- 🌐 In 2007, approximately 13.42% of the labor force was working part time.⁴

Figure 1a. Economically Active Population as Percent of Total Population (Aged 15+) – Selected Regional Countries, 2007



Source: International Labor Organization⁶

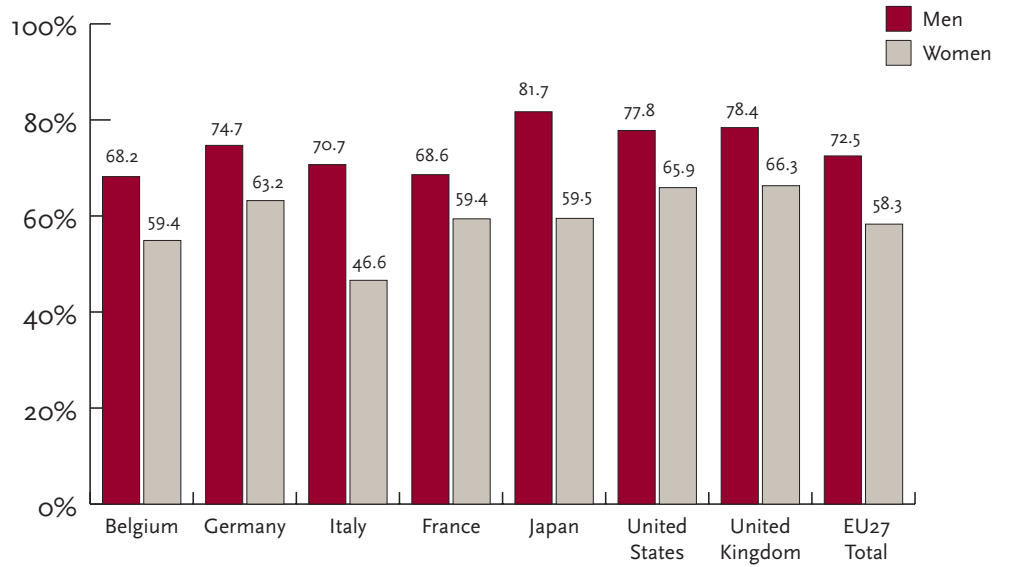
Figure 1b. Economically Active Population As Percent of Total Population (Aged 15+) – Selected GNI Countries, 2007



Source: International Labor Organization⁶

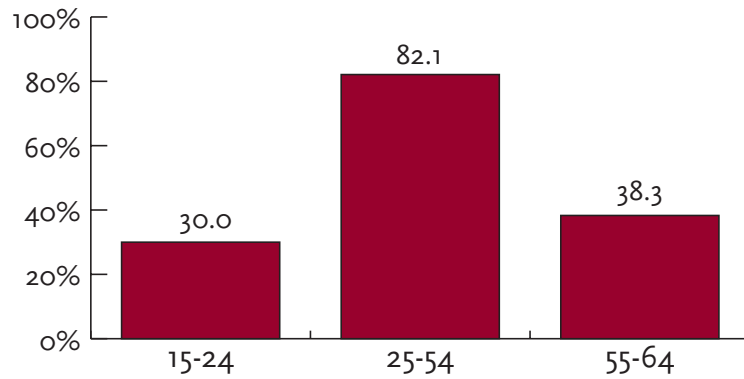
Figure 1b compares the employment as a percent of the total population in France with other countries with high gross national incomes.

Figure 2. Employment Rate, Ages 15-64, by Gender, France and Comparable Nations , 2007



Source: OECD Factbook 2009⁷

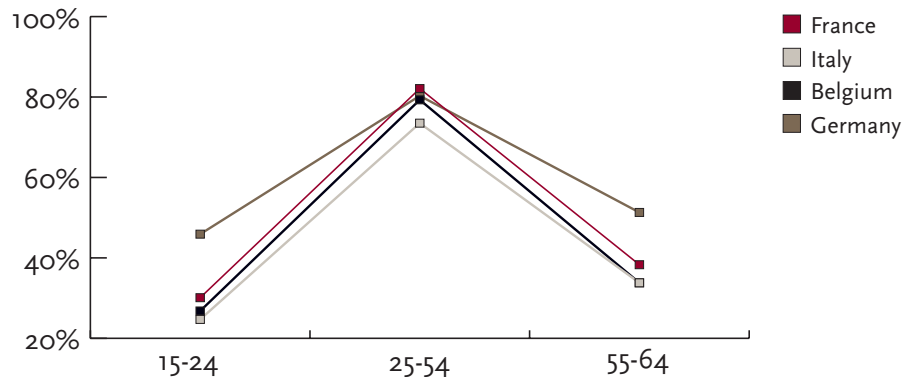
Figure 3. Employment Rates in France, within age group, 2007



Source: OECD, (2009)²

Figure 4. Employment Rates in France Compared to Selected Regional Countries, within age group, 2007

Employment rates for the age group of 25 -54 is the highest in France in comparison to selected regional countries.



Source: OECD Factbook 2009⁷

Figure 5a. Current and Projected Economically Active Population Rates in France, within age group, 2007 and 2020

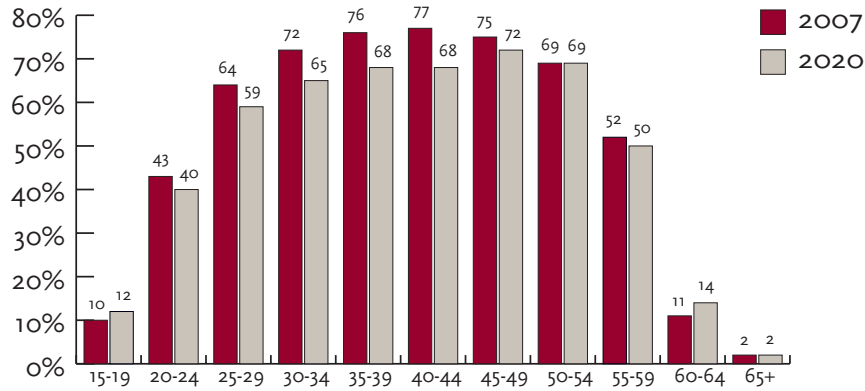
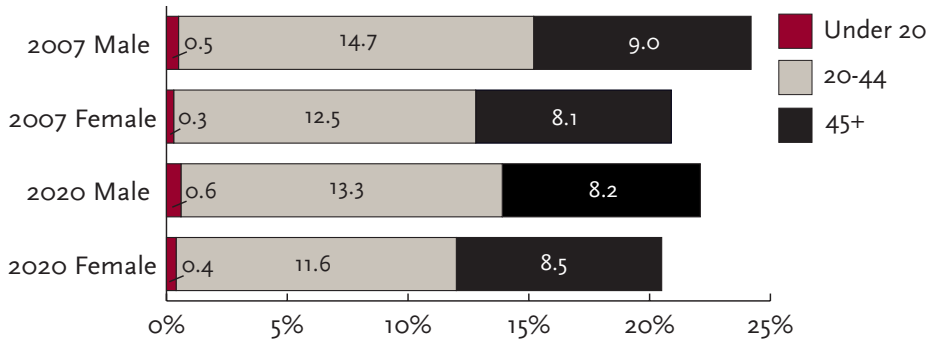


Figure 5a compares the current (2007) and projected (2020) economically active population rates. The economically active age groups of 20-59 are projected to decrease in 2020 in comparison to those in 2007.

Source: International Labor Organization⁶

Figure 5b. Current and Projected Economically Active Population as % of Total Population in France, by Gender, 2007 and 2020

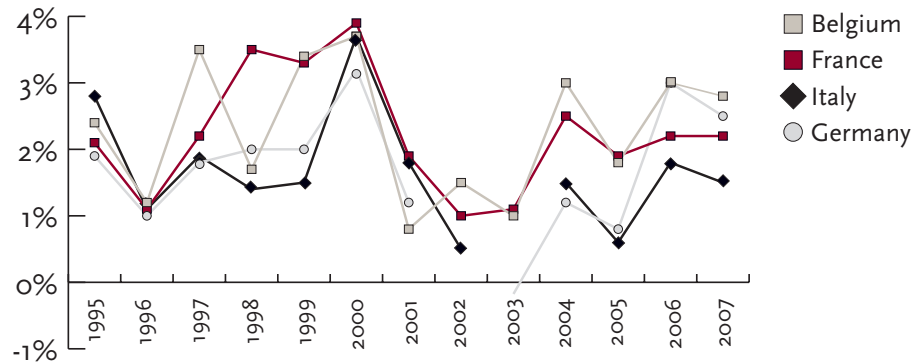


Source: International Labor Organization⁶

ECONOMIC HIGHLIGHTS

- The 2007 Gross Domestic Product in France was \$32,686 per capita. This compares to \$30,220 in Italy, \$46,090 in the United States and \$34,977 in Germany.⁷
- In 2005, GDP growth dipped to 1.89%, down from 2.47% in 2004. GDP growth then rose and stabilized at 2.17% for both 2006 and 2007.⁷

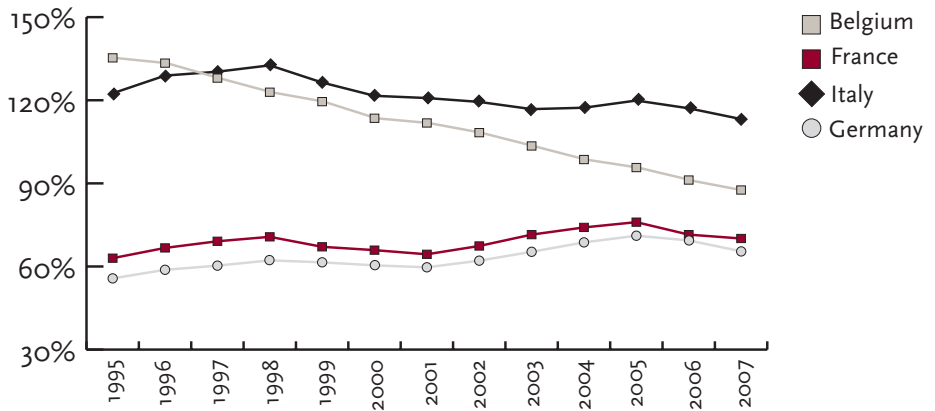
Figure 6. GDP Growth, France, Italy, Germany, and Belgium 1995 - 2007



*GDP growth figures for Germany and Italy are missing from OECD for 2002 and 2003 respectively

Source: OECD Factbook 2009⁷

Figure 7. Total External Debt as Percentage of GDP, Selected Regional Countries, 1995-2007



Source: OECD Factbook 2009⁷

DEMOGRAPHIC HIGHLIGHTS

- 🌐 In 2009, the population in France was 64.3 million,¹ compared to 10.7 million in Belgium, 82.8 million in Germany, and 58.9 million in Italy.⁸
- 🌐 In 2009, the net migration rate per 1000 inhabitants for France stands at 1.48 migrants. Comparatively, it is 1.22 in Belgium, 2.06 in Italy, and 2.19 in Germany.⁸
- 🌐 The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) indicates the number of children to be born during a woman's reproductive life span. In 2009, the TFR for France was 2, which is the highest in the UE, while it was 1.6 for Belgium, 1.32 for Germany, and 1.31 for Italy.⁹
- 🌐 The life expectancy at birth for the population in France was 80.9 years in 2009, 77.8 years for men and 84.3 years for women.¹⁰

Figure 8. Median Age, by Gender, Selected Countries, 2009

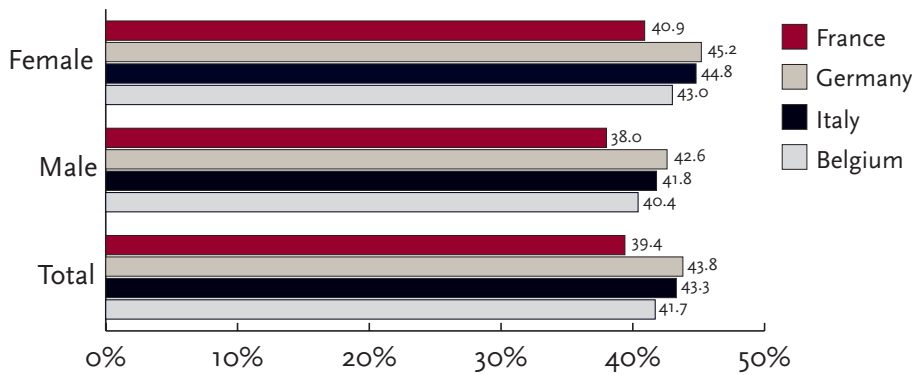
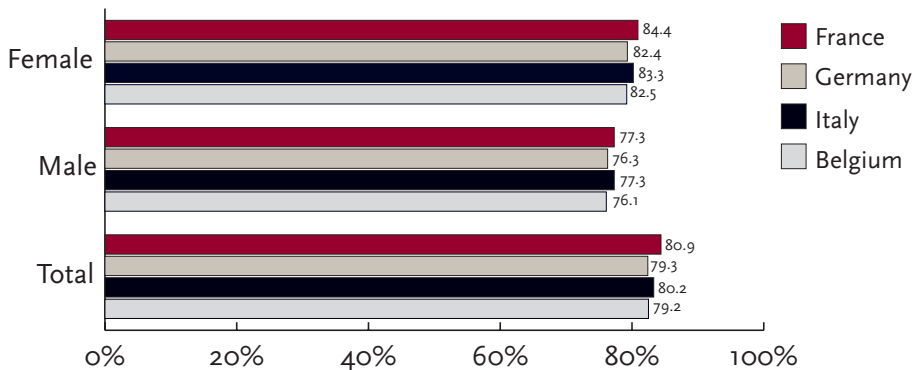


Figure 8 compares the median age of the population by gender to comparable countries. France has the youngest population compared to Belgium, Germany, and Italy.

Source: CIA World Factbook 2009 ¹¹

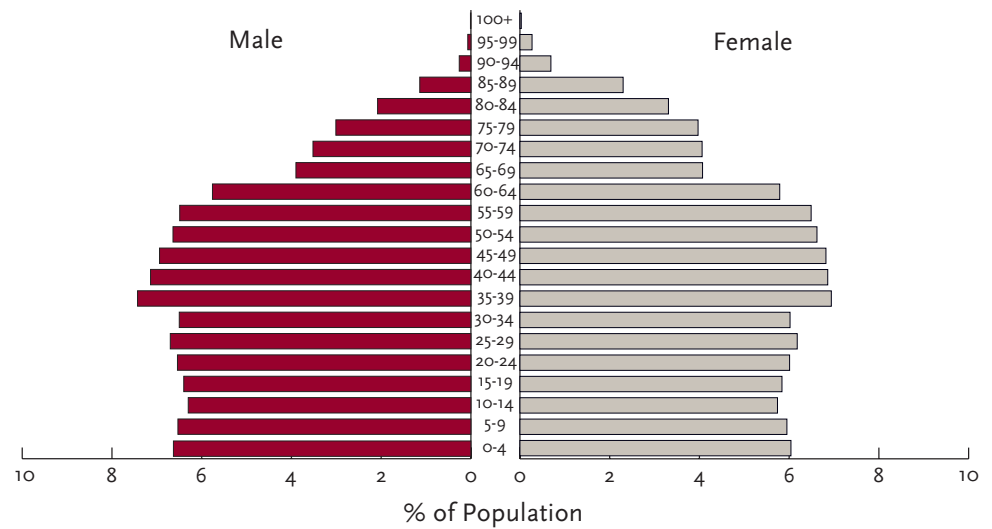
Figure 9. Life Expectancy at Birth, selected countries, 2009



Source: CIA World Factbook 2009 ¹⁰

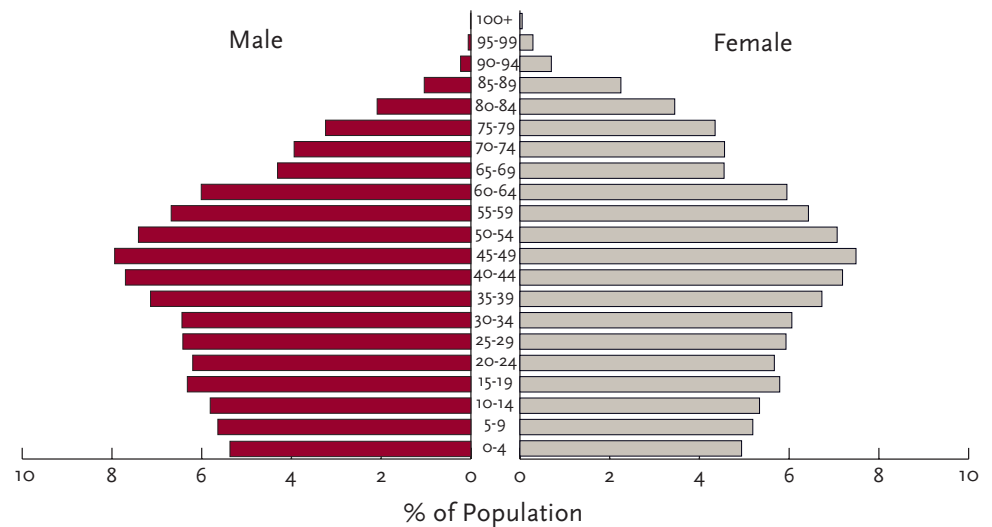
- 🌐 In France, 13.9% of the male population and 18.7% of the female population is 65 or older.¹² In comparison,
- In Belgium, 14.9% of the male population and 20.2% of the female population is 65 or older.
 - In Germany, 18.9% of the male population and 23.1% of the female population is 65 or older.
 - In Italy, 17.2% of the male population and 23.1% of the female population is 65 or older.

Figure 10a. Population Distribution of France, 2009



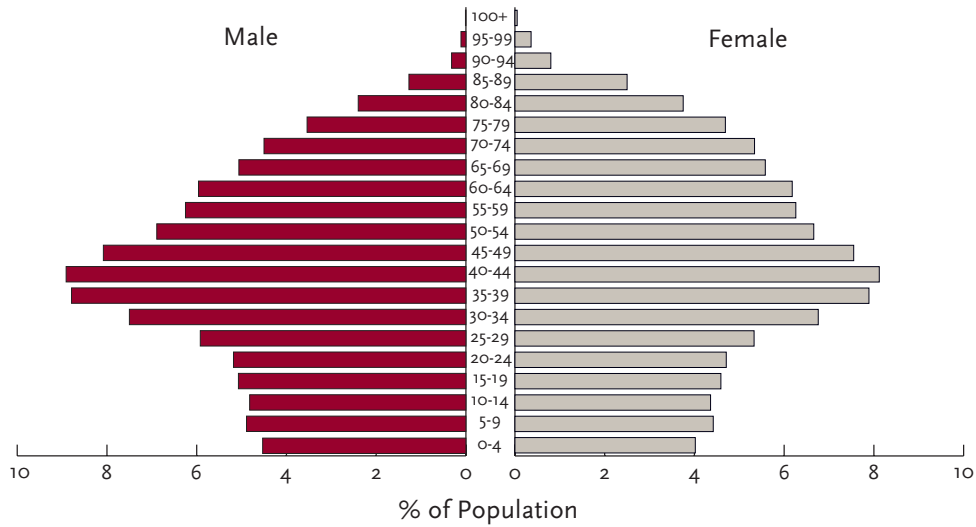
Source: United States Census Bureau¹²

Figure 10b. Population Distribution of Belgium, 2009



Source: United States Census Bureau¹²

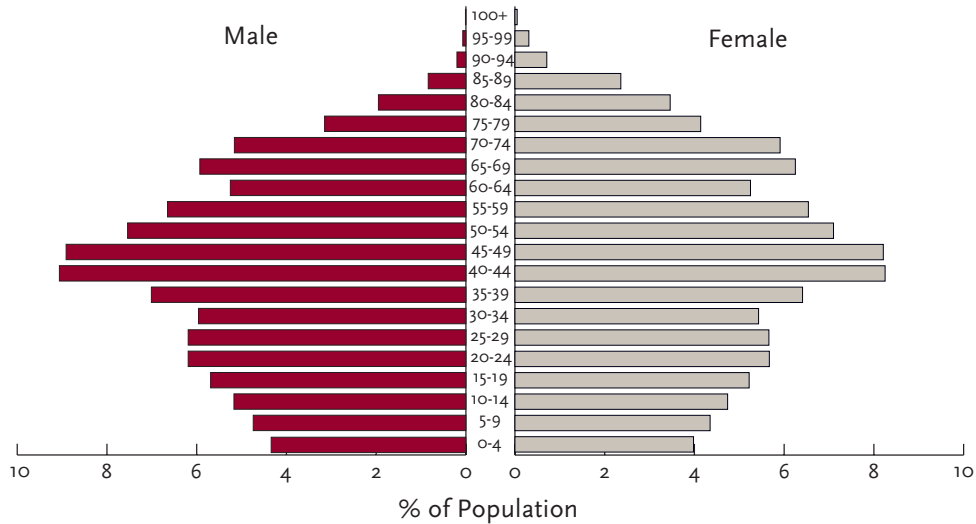
Figure 10c. Population Distribution of Italy, 2009



In Figure 10c the Population Distribution of Italy is shown. It is interesting to note that females age 80 and above is the second largest group in terms of female population distribution, next to females aged 55 – 59.

Source: United States Census Bureau¹²

Figure 10d. Population Distribution of Germany, 2009



Source: United States Census Bureau¹²

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ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

Established in 2007 by the Sloan Center on Aging & Work at Boston College, the Global Perspectives Institute is an international collaboration of scholars and employers committed to the expansion of the quality of employment available to the 21st century multi-generational workforce in countries around the world.

The Global Perspectives Institute focuses on innovative and promising practices that might be adopted by employers and policy-makers.

The Institute's research, publications, and international forums contribute to:

- 🌐 a deeper understanding of the employment experiences and career aspirations of employees of different ages who work in countries around the world;
- 🌐 informed decision making by employers who want to be employers-of-choice in different countries; and
- 🌐 innovative thinking about private-public partnerships that promote sustainable, high-quality employment.

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