

## RESIDENTIAL MIGRATIONS

This sheet represents the population migration movements during the period from 1.1.82 to 31.12.89.

The facts are from the publications of the I.N.S. (National Statistical Institute). For the maps based on communes (1, 3 and 5), the annual publication «Movement of Population» has been used. This shows for each commune the number of those entering and leaving (some from inside the country, some from abroad). The notes on «Population Migrations between arrondissements» which appear in the «Statistical year-book of Belgium» have been relied upon for the maps based on arrondissements.

**Maps 1 and 3** (absolute and relative net migrations), show the negative balances for the large agglomerations and the middle-sized towns of the country. Pronounced exodus is shown for the large conurbations, especially Brussels. In the average middle-sized town, departures appear to be less important; nevertheless, notice should be taken of the fact that a number of more rural communes have been absorbed into towns, following the amalgamations. Moving from a town to an amalgamated less urban commune does not register any more as a migration: the exodus from the middle-sized towns is probably greater than the map leads us to suppose.

Negative migration balances also predominate in large parts of West Flanders, in the Aalst region and other parts of East Flanders, in Limburg and in the Walloon industrial axis.

The largest positive migration balances (absolute and relative) are to be found not only in the outer urban regions of the large agglomerations and in the coastal communes, but also in a certain number of regions which were traditionally zones of emigration such as the Antwerp and the northern Campine, parts of Hainaut in proximity to Brussels, Walloon Brabant and moreover, almost all the territory south of the Sambre-Meuse (where negative balances as in the High Ardennes are somewhat exceptional).

The global picture of residential migrations can be summarised, therefore, in broad lines as follows: an exodus from towns and some traditional emigration areas towards the more distant (more rural) parts of the urban regions and towards certain rural territories that formerly showed negative migration balances.

**Map 5.** This gives an overall view of the «mobility» of the population. This is shown, by the relation between the entries to and departures from communes during the period concerned and the total population (mean values from 1.1.1982 and 31.12.1989).

In the communes of the Brussels agglomeration the figures are strictly speaking very high, abnormally so since there has been no amalgamation of communes. Around Brussels (in Flemish as well as in Walloon Brabant) mobility is very great, and this is mostly explained by the exodus from Brussels.

In Flanders, in comparison to Wallonia, mobility is generally low. Only the environs of Antwerp and (to a lesser extent) of Ghent as well as the coastal communes constitute exceptions.

The linguistic frontier is a net threshold between smaller and larger population mobility, equally well on the limits of the province of Hainaut as of Liège. The Walloon population is much more mobile though here too, there are a few regions with only little mobility (the High Ardennes, for example).

The higher levels of mobility around the main towns is a normal phenomena, but the explanation for the difference between Flanders and Walloon Belgium is not obvious.

**Maps 2, 4 and 6.** These show the migrations between arrondissements and after all they do not differ very much from the maps based on communes but, owing to the fact that the figures for migrations inside the arrondissements are no longer taken into account, the figures are less high. On these maps a certain amount of the detail is lost but, on the other hand, the global picture shows all the better.

**Maps 7 tot 26.** These show the migration balance tendencies among the arrondissements. A selection of twenty arrondissements has been made for this: the twelve arrondissements with the highest net migration figures (positive or negative), i.e. Brussels-Capital, Halle-Vilvoorde, Nivelles, Antwerp, Charleroi, Louvain, Liège, Ghent, Namur, Hasselt, Malines and Soignies, Bruges, Aalst, Verviers, Mons, Courtrai, Ostend, Ypres and furthermore Marche-en-Famenne.

The arrondissements which have not been shown are generally those with the smaller net migration values, and present a picture much resembling one of those mentioned above. They include:

- Turnhout with Malines (Turnhout is rather centred on Antwerp and Malines on Brussels);
- Veurne with Ostend;
- Dixmude, Roeselare, Tielt and Ecklo with Courtrai and Ypres;
- Oudenaarde, Termonde and Saint-Nicolas with Ghent (Saint-Nicolas has moreover more connections with Antwerp than the other arrondissements);
- Ath with Soignies;
- Mouscron and Tournai with Courtrai;
- Maaseik and Tongres with Hasselt;
- Huy, Waremmes, Dinant, Philippeville and Thuin with Namur;
- the remaining arrondissements in Luxemburg (with the exception of Arlon which has a negative migration balance) with Marche-en-Famenne.

**Brussels-Capital (Map 7)** is practically the only arrondissement which exchanges with every other in the country and has balances of some weight and are at any rate worthy of mention. There are heavy negative balances with the other Brabant arrondissements and smaller net negative values with the more distant environs (Malines, Waremmes, Soignies, Ath, Oudenaarde, Aalst, Termonde) and also with Huy, the provinces of Namur and Luxemburg and the coastal arrondissements. On the other hand, there are positive balances with Antwerp, Liège, Ghent, Charleroi, Mons, Limburg, Western Hainaut and the south of West Flanders. This shows that Brussels loses much more in the rest of the urban regions, in certain rural regions of southern Belgium and at the coast than it gains in other parts of the country.

**Halle-Vilvoorde** has a very large positive balance in relation to Brussels but a negative balance (a smaller one) with Louvain and Nivelles. It has some negative balances with a great many of the Walloon arrondissements and a certain number of the Flemish ones (the coast and the environs of the arrondissement Halle-Vilvoorde).

**Antwerp** suffers strong losses in its bordering arrondissements and to Brussels. It has a (small) positive balance with most of the Flemish arrondissements and a (small) negative balance with the Walloon areas.

**Liège** loses chiefly in the surrounding arrondissements of the agglomeration, in all the urban region of Brussels and in Luxemburg, but it has a positive balance with Limburg.

In the arrondissement of **Ghent** there is a negative balance of the urban agglomeration, which probably benefits the remainder of the arrondissement. There is a positive balance with several arrondissements of East Flanders and West Flanders, whilst there are losses with regard to the coast, Antwerp, Brussels and in a very limited way to Wallonia.

In **Charleroi** negative balances predominate above all with the southerly surrounding arrondissements, but also Brussels and elsewhere.

**Louvain** has a large positive net balance with Brussels, Halle-Vilvoorde, Malines and Limburg; there are low positive figures above all with the remainder of Flanders and small negative figures with regard to Wallonia and relatively greater negative figures with Nivelles.

**Bruges** (which consists of the town and some coastal communes) has essentially positive balances with the remainder of Flanders, and very small numbers with Wallonia.

**Nivelles** owes its large positive balance to important additional migrations from Brussels, Halle-Vilvoorde and Louvain, and smaller balances with Flanders, Western Hainaut and Liège, whilst Nivelles itself has lost inhabitants to the arrondissements sited further south.

**Namur** attracts above all new inhabitants originating from Nivelles, Charleroi, Brussels and Halle-Vilvoorde, and to a lesser extent from the other Walloon arrondissements. Balances with Flanders are minimal.

**Aalst** has almost exclusively negative balances (with the exception of Brussels and Halle-Vilvoorde), these to a large extent with the neighbouring Flemish arrondissements, to a lesser extent with the remainder of Flanders and in a very restricted way with Wallonia.

With regard to **Verviers**, one is struck by the important positive balance with respect to Liège and the losses with regard to Brabant, Namur and Luxemburg.

**Hasselt** demonstrates heavy losses, with regard to the provinces of Anvers and Brabant, and the Liège arrondissement, but it has small balances with the remainder of the country.

**Mons** similarly, has negative balances with most other arrondissements, particularly those in Wallonia.

**Courtrai** has small positive balances with southern parts of West Flanders and Mouscron but shows losses with East Flanders, Antwerp, Brabant and Western Hainaut.

**Ostend** is the only arrondissement with almost exclusively positive balances.

**Ypres** on the other hand has almost exclusively negative balances, but they are limited to the Flemish region.

**Soignies** has positive balances with respect to Brabant but has losses with the remainder of Wallonia.

**Marche** loses in the province of Namur but gains with respect to the rest of the country.

**Malines** shows an increase at the expense of Antwerp and several neighbouring arrondissements, but it shows losses especially in Flemish Brabant and Turnhout.

In summary, for the maps from 7 to 26, it can be said as follows:

1. Movements are relatively limited in distance.
2. The linguistic frontier is not an absolute barrier but does limit migrations, apart from the case of Limburg/Liège.
3. The larger the town in an arrondissement, the more losses are made to the profit of the neighbouring arrondissements.
4. Brussels-Capital is stretching out in Brabant and it has a stronger attraction in Wallonia than in Flanders.