

French Colonial Policy in the Social Sphere from 1954 to 1962: The Algerian Demographic Reality and Class Racism as a Model

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Abstract:

French colonial policy in the social sphere, from 1954 to 1962, was marked by a series of contradictions in its handling of Algerian conditions, with the Algerian demographic reality being one of them. Since 1830 until 1962, the French occupation authorities worked, as much as possible, to eliminate the Algerian element that stood as an obstacle to the projects of settlement, exploitation, and the draining of this fertile land's resources, using various brutal methods such as killing, exile, and starvation.

Because it needed a labor force to serve its interests, it attempted to adjust its policy in line with the objectives set by the colonial authorities and their administration, in service of the settlers. The presence of servants was deemed necessary for the colonizer's satisfaction to be complete!

Subsequently, class-based racism emerged to lend a form of conditional colonial tolerance by granting certain services to Algerians who demonstrated the fundamentals of obedience and loyalty. These historical realities compel researchers to examine the details of what occurred in light of archival documents, with neutrality and objectivity.

Introduction:

French policy in the social domain toward Algerians begins with what can be termed "class racism." If racism is defined as attributing to a human group a negative, frightening, and hereditary characteristic that relegates it to the bottom of the human hierarchy, then we may find it difficult to agree that we are dealing strictly with "class racism"¹.

There are several indicators and facts that demonstrate the nature of the social policy applied by colonial France against Algerian society in all its segments (women, men, children), across different age groups, and according to the classes it created (class stratification)². This policy is reflected in numerous administrative innovations,

judicial amendments, and proposed social reforms either suspended, partially implemented, or executed with caution in favor of Algerians.

Another distinction existed among Algerians themselves, as the colonial administration divided them into those loyal to France and those opposed to it. Discussing the immediate objectives of the Constantine Plan of 1958 provides insight into the social policy implemented by the colonial authorities toward Algerian society, which was considered “the intended target of exclusion and exploitation.” General De Gaulle and his aides, through the Constantine Plan of 1958, sought to alter or at least dismantle the social structure of Algeria and to create essential needs within Algerian society. These needs arose as a result of changes in settlement patterns and ways of life. Due to military pressure and the housing program of the Constantine Plan, no fewer than 2,157,000 individuals were displaced from their rural homes to regrouping centers and camps. Some also moved to cities, which experienced rapid expansion, eventually accommodating no less than 30% of the total population. This transformation was accompanied by the construction of at least 15,000 housing units annually, aiming to fulfill the overall plan of building 110,000 rural housing units in regroupment areas for displaced rural populations, and 210,000 urban housing units in villages and cities. Furthermore, the main executor of the project, who managed administrative affairs in Algeria Mr. De Louvrier proposed a plan for one thousand villages intended for populations displaced from their lands, many of whom were living in overcrowded regroupment centers lacking basic living conditions. From here, the following questions arise:

To what extent are the French data concerning Algeria’s population accurate? Are they factual, or were they subject to politicization?

How did the French colonial administration exploit the living conditions of Algerians to suppress or isolate the liberation revolution?

Did Algerian families benefit from colonial urbanization and the services that were primarily provided to Europeans?

1. Demographic Situation:

1.1 Population Growth and Structure:

On 31/10/1954³, according to census results indicating the population in each department across Algeria, the figures were as follows:

Algiers and its suburbs: approximately 3,103,205 inhabitants, including 402,614 non-Muslims.

Oran and its suburbs: approximately 2,178,835 inhabitants, including 385,149 non-Muslims.

Constantine and its suburbs: approximately 3,425,273 inhabitants, including 183,304 non-Muslims.

As for the southern regions of Algeria (Territoire du Sud), the population was estimated at approximately 822,413 inhabitants, distributed across the regions of Aïn-Sefra, Ghardaïa, Touggourt, and the Saharan oases.

Thus, the total population of Algeria was estimated at approximately 9,529,726 inhabitants, including:

8,707,313 inhabitants in the north (Algérie du Nord).

822,413 inhabitants in the south (Territoire du Sud).

Population on November 1, 1954 and November 1, 1960

Category	Nov 1, 1954	Nov 1, 1960
Total Resident Population		
Europeans*	1,042,409	1,038,998
Muslims (Total)	8,487,317	9,043,293
Total Population	9,529,726	10,082,291

Urban Population (55 Cities, excluding “special status” population share)

Category	1954	1960
Europeans	760,402	853,180
Muslims (Total)	1,397,536	3,407,623
Total Urban Population	2,157,938	4,260,803

Additional Indicators

2,000,000 persons



Population regroupment (approx.):

Average household size:

Europeans: 3.58

Muslims: 5.65

Birth rate:

Europeans: 0.0118

Muslims: 0.0400

Overall mortality rate:

Europeans: 0.0086

Muslims: 0.0175



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Life expectancy:

Europeans: 60.0 years

Muslims: 42.0 years

Infant mortality rate:

Europeans:

Total: 0.048

External causes: 0.040

Muslims:

Total: 0.167

External causes: 0.108

Number of Muslim workers in metropolitan France: 348,000

Primary School Enrollment (Beginning of 1960)

Group	Number of Students
Europeans	139,269
Muslims	700,658
Total	839,954

Illiteracy Rate (Population aged 14 and over, 1954)

Group	Men	Women
Europeans	5.9%	8.2%
Muslims	87%	95%

Source: Pierre Bourdieu, *Travail et Travailleurs en Algérie*, MOUTON et CO, Paris, 1963, p. 249.

When we speak of the North, we refer to the population of cities and their suburbs, numbering (46) municipalities (communes). In the 1961 census register, the number of municipalities changed to 55, namely: Algiers, Sour El-Ghozlane, Blida, Boufarik, Cherchell, Médéa, Miliana, Chlef, Ténès, Tizi Ouzou, (Guyotville) Aïn Benian, (Koléa) Koléa, (L'Arba) Dar El Beïda, (Marengo) Hadjout, (Affreville) Khemis Miliana, Bordj Menäïel, Bouira, Oran, (Arcole) Bir El Djir, Mers El-Kébir, La Sénia, Aïn Témouchent, Arzew, (Pérrégaux) Mohammadia, Mascara, Saïda, Mostaganem, Relizane, Sidi Bel Abbès, Tiaret, Tlemcen, Beni Saf, (Nemours) Ghazaouet, Hammam Bou Hadjar, (Saint-Denis du Sig) Sig, Frenda, Maghnia, Constantine, Tebessa, Batna, Biskra, Annaba, El Kala, Béjaïa, Jijel, Guelma, Souk Ahras,

(Philippeville) Skikda, (Stora), Sétif, Khenchela, Aïn Beïda, Bordj Bou Arreridj, (Saint Arnaud) El Eulma⁴.

Algiers and its suburbs: (Birmandreïs) Bir Mourad Rais, (Bouzaréa) Bouzaréa, (El-Biar) El Biar, (Hussein-Dey) Hussein Dey, (Kouba) Kouba, (Maison carrée) El Harrach, (Saint-Eugène) Bologhine.

Oran and its suburbs: (Arcole) Bir El Djir, (Mars-El-Kébir) Mers El-Kébir, (La Sénia) La Sénia.

Constantine and its dependencies: (Aumale) Sour El-Ghozlane, (Blida) Blida, (Boufarik) Boufarik, (Cherchal) Cherchell, (Médéa) Médéa, (Miliana) Miliana, (Orléansville) Chlef, (Ténès) Ténès, (Tizi Ouzou) Tizi Ouzou, (Aïn Témouchent) Aïn Témouchent, (Arzew) Arzew, (Perrégaux) Mohammadia, (Mascara) Mascara, (Saïda) Saïda, (Mostaganem) Mostaganem, (Relizane) Relizane, (Sidi Bel Abbès) Sidi Bel Abbès, (Tiaret) Tiaret, (Tlemcen) Tlemcen, (Béni Saf) Beni Saf, (Nemours) Ghazaouet, (Tébessa) Tébessa, (Batna) Batna, (Biskra) Biskra, (Bône) Bône / Annaba, (Bougie) Béjaïa, (La Calle) El Kala, (Djijelli) Jijel, (Guelma) Guelma, (Souk-Ahras) Souk Ahras, (Philippeville) Skikda, (Stora) and Sétif⁵.

A simple comparison between the population census of 1954 and that of 1960 allows us to draw several conclusions that raise multiple questions. The same sources concerning Algeria’s population whether urban or rural, Muslim or non-Muslim sometimes provide ambiguous information.

Table No. 02: Population of Municipalities in Urban and Rural Areas for the Years 1954 and 1960

Year	Urban Population (Non-Muslims)	Urban Population (Muslims)	Urban Total	Rural Population (Non-Muslims)	Rural Population (Muslims)	Rural Total	Total Municipal Population
1954	792	1,624	2,416	182.2	6,347.6	6,529.8	8,945.8
1960	855.9	2,470.1	3,326.0	183.7	6,572.6	6,756.3	10,082.3

Source: GGA, Annuaire statistique de l’Algérie, 1954, p. 19.

Figure No. 01: Population of Municipalities in Urban and Rural Areas for the Years 1954–1960

Source: Prepared by the researcher; see: GGA, *Annuaire statistique de l'Algérie* 1961, Service de statistique générale, Algiers, 1961, p. 24.

These figures concern only Northern Algeria, excluding the population of the Sahara.

We can also observe the increase in the Muslim population in 1960 (2.470.1 million inhabitants) compared to 1954 (1.624 million inhabitants). However, this raises once again an important question: are these figures truly accurate? Did the number of Algerians increase despite suffering, killings, and harsh living conditions?

In contrast, the population of the Sahara was estimated at approximately 490,000 inhabitants as of October 31, 1954 ⁶.

Returning to the population census of the main cities namely the large and important urban centers in Algeria and relying on statistical records from the years of French occupation in general, and particularly those of the Algerian War of Liberation (as they represent the core of our research problem), we aim to determine the extent of the impact of French colonial policy on population growth, activities, and even their geographical distribution between cities and rural areas, as well as between (internal and external migration), albeit approximately. It should be noted that we do not fully trust the accuracy of these figures due to the machinery of destruction, killing, and racial discrimination employed by the colonial authorities against the Algerian people who supported their victorious revolution from 1954 to 1962 especially regarding the questionable number of Algerians themselves.

The population of Greater Algiers, including its well-known popular districts Bab El Oued, the Casbah, central Algiers, Mustapha, Belcourt, Salembier (Cl. Salembica), Ruisseau, Bouzaréa, Saint-Eugène, El Biar, Kouba, Bir Mourad Raïs (Birmandreïs), Hussein Dey, including Dely Ibrahim, Oued Smar, El Harrach (Maison-Carrée), and Baraki was estimated at 883,879 inhabitants, including 542,918 Muslims (i.e., Algerians), 307,287 Europeans (non-Muslims), and 9,670 foreigners.

In the suburbs of Oran, the population was estimated at 425,875 inhabitants, with 191,895 Europeans, 28,177 foreigners, and approximately 193,472 Algerians. Within Oran itself, Europeans numbered 183,686, foreigners 23,084, while Algerians totaled 175,770. From these statistics concerning major Algerian cities, it is noticeable that in some cities the number of Europeans and foreigners is relatively close to that of Algerians, unlike other cities where Algerians significantly outnumber Europeans. This is illustrated in the following table:

Table No. 03: Population of Major Cities in Algeria, 1960

Municipality	Non-Muslims	Muslims	Foreigners	Total Population
Constantine	36,486	148,025	338	220,849
Annaba	47,906	113,896	476	162,278
Sidi Bel Abbès	23,237	61,387	2,389	100,013
Sétif	6,845	84,104	85	91,034
Blida	19,070	68,358	213	87,641
Skikda	25,363	58,934	631	84,928
Tlemcen	10,843	67,853	470	78,166
Mostaganem	18,541	48,487	733	67,761
Béjaïa	6,434	55,285	128	61,847
Biskra	2,218	52,722	133	55,073
Mascara	8,297	43,003	227	51,527

Source: GGA, *Annuaire Statistique de l'Algérie*, Thirteenth Volume, 1961, p. 23.

In general, it is observed that the most densely populated urban centers were Algiers and its suburbs, followed by Oran and its suburbs, then Constantine, Annaba, and Sidi Bel Abbès. These cities were likely more attractive to Europeans for well-known economic reasons.

This significant disparity remained one of the main causes behind the outbreak of the Algerian War of Liberation. From its very beginning, the revolutionary leadership received widespread support from Algerians, who actively participated in the struggle against French colonialism. Algerians felt oppressed and persistently sought a way to free themselves from overwhelming burdens. Thus, at every moment, the Algerian people awaited the signal to break the wall of French colonialism and achieve independence.

A specific study on the standard of living in Algeria in 1954 indicated that the population of the country reached 9,528,000 inhabitants, including 1,042,000 Europeans, representing about 10% of the total population. The growth rate of Europeans was comparable to that of the population in France itself⁷. Although successive statistics remain questionable in credibility, they nonetheless confirm a clear reality: the noticeable increase in the indigenous Algerian population. It rose from 5 million inhabitants in the 1921 census to 62% in 1936, reaching approximately 8.4 million in 1954, that is, nine times the European population (six times more in 1921)⁸.

Accordingly, from the 1930s onward, demographic growth among the indigenous population began to be perceived as a threat to the French presence in particular and the European presence in general and later even to France itself.

Most French and European writings during the colonial period confirm this. For example, R. Gendarme, in his study of the Algerian economy (1959), stated: “The level of growth of the indigenous population poses a serious problem for Algeria, as both productivity and output do not keep pace with this high growth.” He concludes: “A dark future awaits the country; for more than a quarter of a century, the catastrophe of demographic growth among the indigenous population in Algeria has been developing...”⁹.

Similarly, Chevalier stated: “The demographic problem in North Africa constitutes both the tragedy and the prospects of Algeria, in relation to demographic issues and their consequences.” Meanwhile, Goutti noted: “The relative decline of Europeans in Algeria, the rapid growth of the Algerian population and its tragic consequences, and the demographic factor in shaping Algeria...”

An analysis of growth rates shows a clear increase: the rate rose from 1% in the 1920s to 2% in the 1930s, then declined to 1.7% during the period 1936–1948, influenced by World War II (1939–1945), when famine and epidemics spread. In the 1950s, it exceeded 2.5%, reaching 3% in 1954. The following table by J. Breil illustrates this:

Table No. 04: Growth Rate of the Indigenous Population (Annual Average)

Period	Rate (%)	Period	Rate (%)
1921–1926	0.19	1936–1948	1.80
1926–1931	1.64	1948–1954	1.61
1931–1936	2.10	1954–1960	2.54

Source: Kamal Kateb, *Europeans, Natives, and Jews in Algeria 1930–1960*, previous reference, p. 329.

Figure No. 02: Growth Rate of the Indigenous Population (Annual Average)

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the data in the table above.

Based on the appropriate age distribution, the crude rate and the net rate of increase were estimated respectively at 315 and 210 per thousand. J. Breil concludes by stating that “the Algerian Muslim population doubles in less than 30 years.”

The European community in Algeria numbered about 948,000 inhabitants in 1954. Its rate of increase was weak and declining, especially in the final years before the outbreak of the Liberation Revolution. It stood at 1.07 in 1950, declined to 0.99 in 1953, then reached 1% in 1954. This means that the number of French people increased by no more than 10,000 persons annually, while the Algerian increase

exceeded it several times over. This heightened European fears and demonstrated the failure of the settlement policy, due to several reasons, most importantly:

The halt of European or French migration to Algeria around 1934.

Weak fertility among the French of Algeria, as the French family ranged from 1 to 3 members, and families with more than two children did not exceed 32%; the rest ranged from none to two children: 25% had two children, 24% had one child, and 19% had no children¹⁰.

Researcher and historian Yahia Bouaziz wrote about “the Algerian homeland and the European minority”^{11]} after examining Document No. 22 concerning the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Information Service.

The arguments used by colonialists to deny the Algerian people’s right to independence and to oppose their aspirations for freedom were based essentially on the European minority present in Algeria. This minority, although differing in its ethnic composition ¹²and social position, shared at least one characteristic: its excessive superiority over the Arab element in Algeria, whether economically, socially, or politically. It is self-evident that this European minority derived such superiority from the colonial system.

Regarding the numerical importance of the European minority and the elements composing it, Europeans generally lived in major cities¹³. French propaganda deliberately inflated their number. The figure often repeated by French services 1,200,000 was entirely contrary to fact and reality, since the census of October 31, 1954, conducted by the French authorities themselves, estimated the number of Europeans at 1,042,000.

The results of the last population census of 1954 also show that the total population, including migrant workers, reached 9,528,000 inhabitants, including 1,042,000 Europeans.

Even if the stated figures sometimes confused the European population with the Muslim population, attention should focus mainly on the latter. Europeans represented only about 10% of the total, and their development was similar to that of metropolitan France. It remains necessary, however, to consider the initial basic migration, which has now slowed but still exists and is supported by the contribution of urban elements, as well as that of Spaniards who entered more or less clandestinely and often returned to their own country¹⁴. The demographic composition in Algeria did not witness a change in races, as confirmed by several sources and references consulted¹⁵.

What we have concluded through this modest research is that the demographic situation in Algeria would witness a tense and dangerous phase. The outbreak of the Liberation Revolution on November 1, 1954, caused great panic among settlers, who were targeted by the strikes of the National Liberation Army (A.L.N) as part of a strategic plan. Consequently, they began to leave Algerian land one after another, just as they had first arrived.

French settler colonialism continued to use the thesis of the “minority”¹⁶ throughout its presence in Algeria, which indicates the seriousness of this issue even during the Liberation Revolution. In this regard, it is worth mentioning what appeared in one of the documents of the National Liberation Front after 129 years of occupation, entitled “There Is No Minority Problem in Algeria...”. The article states that the 1954 census determined the number of non-Muslims at 1,093,000, and no more than that, contrary to what Jacques Soustelle and others claimed. Among them were 60,000 foreigners, whose issue concerned their consulates: Spaniards, Maltese, Greeks, Swiss, Germans, and others. As for Jews, their number according to the same census was 150,000 French citizens, most of them merchants and employees living in the Constantine region, Tlemcen, and the South. The remaining approximately 800,000 were French Algerians, 50% to 60% of whom were of European rather than French origin and had obtained French nationality under the law of 1889. Only 28,000 of them among them 5,000 large landowners owned vineyards, alfa grass lands, and cereal farms, while 80% lived in cities.

It should not be forgotten that the French army periodically received reinforcements. On July 15, 1955, its number increased by 200,000 men, rising to more than 400,000 in 1956, excluding auxiliary forces and NATO forces. It was an armada, while the National Liberation Army numbered only 20,000 fighters!¹⁷

We can use a set of criteria to determine the nature of Algeria’s demographic composition during the Liberation Revolution that is, the period between 1954 and 1962 according to the developments experienced by Algeria and its people.

By 1954, Algerian demography had increased significantly, closing the door to settler expansion and reaching, in the eyes of the French and the settlers, a maximum threshold that caused them anxiety. The following table presents the population of 55 municipalities, excluding the Sahara, which was subjected to a separate ethnic study. (See Appendix No. 10).

Table No. 05: Population of Municipalities in Urban and Rural Areas (Excluding the Sahara)

Year	Urban Population (Non-Muslims)	Urban Population (Muslims)	Urban Total	Rural Population (Non-Muslims)	Rural Population (Muslims)	Rural Total	Total Municipal Population	Percentage of Total Population (%)
1948	737	1,329	2,066	172.7	533.1	705.8	7,569.7	27.3
1954	792	1,624	2,416	182.2	634.7	816.9	8,945.8	27
1960	855.9	2,470.1	3,326.0	183.7	657.2	1,485.9	10,082.3	33

Source: GGA, Annuaire statistique de l'Algérie, 1961, p. 19.

Figure No. 03: Population of Municipalities in Urban and Rural Areas (Excluding the Sahara)

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the table above.

This census is almost generally agreed upon; however, the qualifier “almost” raises questions. Some references estimate the population at 10,196,700, while others support different approximations. It should be noted that we will include estimated figures for Algerians confined in regroupment camps within major districts¹⁸, as well as the numbers of Algerians who emigrated. The missing link, however, remains the real estimates of Algerians who were imprisoned or disappeared (that is, those who were not officially recorded).

In addition, there are those killed during the Algerian War of Liberation. Seven and a half years of conflict for the preservation of French presence in Algeria from November 1, 1954, to July 1962 left behind crimes whose true toll remains unknown to this day.

A question that puzzled us is whether French military forces brought in to suppress the Algerian revolution were included in population censuses, knowing that censuses were conducted every five years (i.e., 1954 to 1959). From the same general statistical sources on Algeria, we observe discrepancies in population figures as follows:

- 1948: 8,681,785 inhabitants
- 1954: 9,529,726 inhabitants
- 1960: 10,196,740 inhabitants¹⁹

Figure No. 04: Discrepancies in Population Figures

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the above data.

Meanwhile, Jilali Sari, in his work *Dispossession of Peasants from Their Land*, gives the figure of 7,840,000 inhabitants for 1954²⁰, whereas Robert Aron provides 8,449,300 Muslims (89%) and 984,000 Europeans (11%)²¹.

This census was issued by the Emergency Measures Commission, which replaced the I.G.R.P (Inspection Générale des Regroupements) that is, the General Commission for Regroupment Camps. It provides the number of centers and regroupment areas in each region. By April 1961, the policy of regroupment, in its first phase, revealed the actual number of Algerians, since they were the only ones gathered in these centers. The percentages were not calculated based on the total population estimated at 10,000,000, but only on Muslims living in Algeria, estimated at 9,000,000. These figures were derived from periodic reports and data from sub-prefectures²².

We now turn to Algerian refugees in Tunisia and Morocco, who fled due to oppression and forced displacement imposed by French colonial authorities, as well as the intensity of the strikes carried out by the Algerian National Liberation Army (A.L.N).

Their real numbers became clear after Algeria and France reached the Ceasefire Agreement on March 19, 1962, and a transitional government was formed. Algerian refugees then began preparing to return to their country²³. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees initiated their repatriation from Morocco to Algeria on May 10, 1962, after screening procedures. Their number was estimated at 61,400 refugees by July 25, 1962.

As for Algerian refugees in Tunisia, their repatriation began on May 30, 1962, and their number was estimated at 120,000 refugees by July 20, 1962. According to 1958 statistics, refugees in Tunisia and Morocco numbered about 3,500, of whom 50% were children, 35% women, and approximately 15% men.

Thus, the total recorded by United Nations statistics amounted to 200,000 Algerian refugees in both Tunisia and Morocco, in addition to 100,000 others who returned to Algeria by their own means²⁴. Therefore, the total number of refugees in Tunisia and Morocco ranged between 300,000 and 350,000.

It remains to include the number of Algerian migrants to France and other countries during the period from 1954 to 1962, in addition to the active and unemployed population within Algeria.

2.1 Births and Deaths:

1.2.1 Births:

Rapid demographic growth became a driving force for population migration toward major Algerian cities or toward France in search of employment. As a result of medical improvements, mortality rates declined, and population growth rates increased significantly, reaching 31% in Algeria. More than half of Algeria's population consisted of young people from 1954 onward, as confirmed by the statistics presented in the table below:

Table No. 06: Algeria (1954–1960) – Percentage Distribution of the Muslim Population

Population Distribution	1954 (%)	1960 (%)
Age 0–19	53.9	54
Age 20–59	40.8	40
Age 60 and over	5.3	6
Total	100	100

Source: Ammar Bouhouche, *Algerian Workers in France*, National Publishing and Distribution Company, Algiers, 1975, p. 167.

We note that the proportion of the age group (0–19 years) increased slightly from 53.9% in 1954 to 54% in 1960. Other population estimates in Algeria indicate that the number of rural “non-Muslims” increased by about 1,500 individuals between 1954 and 1960, which is lower than natural growth.

Regarding population development in Algeria, the number of inhabitants in 1954 was as follows:

Table No. 07: Population Growth in Algeria (Muslims Only)

Census Year	Population	Increase/Decrease Between Censuses	Annual Increase/Decrease
1954	8,449,300	770,200	128,366
1960	9,633,100	1,183,800	197,300

Source: Dorothy Good, *Notes on the Demography of Algeria*, Population Index, Vol. 27, No. 1, January 1961, p. 7.

The following graph illustrates the evolution of the European and Muslim populations in Algeria between 1926 and 1960:

Figure No. 05: Evolution of European and Muslim Populations in Algeria (1926–1960)

Source: Daniel Lefevre, *Chère Algérie, La France et sa colonie 1930–1962*, Flammarion, Paris, 2005, p. 71.

Table No. 08: Movement of the Muslim Population in Urban Municipalities – General Results for 1960 by Region and Department

Region / Department	Marriages	Live Births	Deaths	Infant Deaths (Under 1 Year)	Natural Increase (Births minus Deaths)
Algiers Region					
Algiers	6,453	37,423	11,850	5,269	25,573
Médéa	506	2,767	1,090	344	1,677
Skikda	990	5,079	2,543	981	2,536
Tizi Ouzou	629	4,216	1,520	511	2,696
Total	8,578	49,485	17,003	7,105	32,482
Oran Region					
Oran	4,600	20,992	7,108	3,490	13,844
Mostaganem	1,077	6,200	2,096	1,081	4,104
Saïda	233	923	436	184	487
Tiaret	608	2,312	1,086	476	1,226
Tlemcen	1,103	5,809	2,368	1,063	3,441
Total	7,711	36,236	13,094	6,294	23,142
Constantine Region					
Constantine	2,691	14,450	6,303	2,287	8,147
Batna	751	5,463	2,407	859	3,056
Annaba	2,062	10,831	4,361	1,680	6,470
Sétif	2,552	9,083	3,209	1,218	5,880
Total	8,056	39,827	16,274	6,274	23,553
Algeria (Total)					
Algeria	24,345	125,548	46,371	19,443	79,177

Source: GGA, *Annuaire Statistique de l'Algérie*, Thirteenth Volume, 1961, p. 34.

The reality of demographic growth among the Algerian population imposed itself strongly. Despite extremely difficult conditions civil unrest, epidemics, famine, and dispossession the Algerian people managed to regenerate themselves. Thanks to their vitality, they resisted repression, thwarted plans aimed at their “disappearance,” and proved false the theory of the “extinction of less civilized peoples” through

contact with European populations. This is confirmed by official statistics published in the Algerian statistical yearbooks²⁵.

Table No. 09: Evolution of Algeria's Population (1886–1954)

Year	Algerians (Urban)	Algerians (Rural)	Europeans (Urban)	Europeans (Rural)
1886	226,126	3,061,091	297,305	517,167
1906	341,591	3,704,456	441,499	233,431
1926	508,235	4,107,546	591,908	236,672
1936	722,293	4,847,814	708,220	230,311
1948	1,129,482	5,747,930	708,670	201,009
1954	1,997,536	7,051,769	760,402	196,000

Source: GGA, Annuaire statistique de l'Algérie, 1948–1949, p. 29.

It is noticeable that there are sometimes slight discrepancies in statistics concerning the Algerian population in terms of numbers, but there are also significant differences in other statistics, particularly concerning the year 1954 the eve of the Liberation Revolution.

Table No. 10: Evolution of the Algerian Population

Year	Rural Population	Urban Population
1948	6,221,000	1,129,000
1954	7,052,000	1,397,000

Source: Ahmed Henni, Agricultural Colonization and Underdevelopment in Algeria 1830–1954, Doctoral Thesis, University of Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, Economics, September 1975, p. 160.

Table No. 11: Comparison Between Urban and Rural Populations (1906–1954)

Year	Urban Population (Total)	% Algerian s (Urban)	% Europea ns (Urban)	Rural Populatio n (Total)	% Algerian s (Rural)	% Europea ns (Rural)
1906	783,090	43.6%	56.37%	3,937,884	94.07%	5.92%
1954	2,157,938	64.76%	35.23%	7,275,425	96.92%	3.07%

Source: GGA, Annuaire statistique de l'Algérie, 1955, p. 19.

Figure No. 06: Comparison Between Urban and Rural Populations for the Years 1906 and 1954

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the table above.

The increase in the European population led to the growth of the agricultural sector, and also reflected the expansion of economic activity and trade. According to statistics for the period between 1880 and 1955, the annual growth rates were as follows²⁶:

- Agriculture: 1.5%
- Industry: 3.1%
- Services: 2.0%
- Production: 1.9%
- Population: 1.6%
- Per capita production: 0.3%

As Robert Aron stated, the proportion of Muslims in public service declined each year due to the absorption of Algerian services into urban services and the regulations governing public employment. This elite was unable to find its “place in the sun”²⁷

A significant decline in the number of registered civil status records was observed during the years 1956 and 1957. This was due to insufficient reporting in unstable and disturbed regions, as a result of the ongoing events at the time namely the War of Liberation (1954–1962)²⁸.

Table No. 12: Annual Birth and Death Rates for All Urban Municipalities

Year	Births (Absolute Numbers)	Total Deaths	Deaths Under 1 Year	Birth Rate (per 10,000 inhabitants)	General Death Rate (per 10,000 inhabitants)	Infant Mortality Rate (per 1,000 live births)
1953	47,986	19,985	8,417	461	192	175
1954	52,694	19,688	8,129	465	174	154
1955	57,476	19,499	8,231	465	167	143

1956	58,102	23,312	9,696	463	163	167
1957	66,014	28,603	11,300	460	168	171
1958	72,381	32,107	13,454	463	205	186
1959	84,548	33,335	13,953	469	185	165

Total Urban Municipalities ²⁹

Year	Births	Total Deaths	Deaths Under 1 Year	Birth Rate	Death Rate	Infant Mortality Rate
1956	70,283	28,095	11,257	469	162	160
1957	79,195	34,218	13,465	462	166	170
1958	85,335	38,588	15,667	470	213	184
1959	112,860	45,988	18,848	470	192	167
1960	125,548	46,371	10,443	508	188	155

Source: GGA, Annuaire Statistique de l'Algérie, 1961, p. 38.

Figure No. 07: Annual Birth and Death Rates for All Urban Municipalities

Source: Prepared by the researcher; see: GGA, Annuaire statistique de l'Algérie 1961, Service de statistique générale, Algiers, 1961, p. 38.

As part of colonial policy aimed at subjugating and weakening Algerians, as well as exacting the desired form of retaliation, regroupment camps were established in inland and remote areas. During hot periods, scorching sand winds forced inhabitants to remain inside tents for most of the day. At night, they were exposed to scorpion stings as they slept on alfa-grass bedding. Despite the prevalence of numerous diseases, particularly respiratory illnesses, doctors rarely visited these camps, and many Algerians preferred to endure suffering rather than seek medical attention³⁰.

According to El Moudjahid newspaper, in a village in the Soummam region, 900 children were recorded, with one child dying every day. In the Ouarsenis region, in a village of 1,000 inhabitants 600 of whom were children an officer of indigenous affairs noted that it was the third such case within four days. In another camp inhabited by 5,200 people, 250 individuals died in a single month, with 30% of them suffering from respiratory diseases. On the “Michel” farm, child mortality reached 50% for those under one year old in 1958, compared to 15%–30% previously³¹.

2. Decline in Living Standards:

A. Nature of the Algerian Family:

The Algerian family was characterized by its large size. Many individuals were unable to improve their social and financial status due to their modest income and the multiplicity of family needs. This phenomenon applied to a large number of people who owned small shops or held technical positions in government administrations.

B. Weak Individual Income:

This was one of the main reasons that pushed many Algerians to emigrate especially those without employment, income³², or even shelter, due to the destructive policy adopted by French authorities against the Algerian Liberation Revolution from 1954 to 1962. The income of a small trader or a modest employee in 1951 did not exceed 42,350 old francs³³. Meanwhile, the gross income from properties seized by Europeans in 1954 reached 114.4 billion francs out of a total 205.6 billion francs, representing the total income of Algerian agriculture. Despite the immense wealth of these settlers, they benefited from the majority of agricultural credit³⁴.

Such income was insufficient to meet even basic needs, regardless of the relatively low cost of living at the time. Therefore, many individuals were compelled to seek additional work to overcome financial hardship. If they failed, they began considering emigration abroad, particularly to France, hoping to obtain higher wages that would allow them to support their families³⁵. This was the condition of urban Algerians so what then of those living in rural areas and villages?

C. Economic Policy:

The living standard of Algerians can be considered a “mirror” reflecting various colonial plans, primarily economic policy, which resulted in a class-based society within urban environments³⁶. In coastal cities such as Algiers, Annaba, and Oran major ports more than 13% of the population of northern Algeria was concentrated in 1954, serving as points of contact with overseas countries.

These cities gathered individuals and commercial institutions representing vital links in economic activity. Meanwhile, within inland regions, agricultural markets such as Constantine, Sidi Bel Abbès, Sétif, and Mascara experienced fluctuations in development and price instability. Trade exchange zones also represented key contact points between different regions of Algeria, particularly in the Tell region, known for grain and fruit production. The steppe regions served as grazing areas for livestock, such as Tiaret and Saïda. Other cities were designated for strategic military purposes, especially in the southern regions rich in oil and natural gas. Some areas were marginalized from the beginning of French occupation and later rediscovered for new purposes, such as Chlef (Orléansville), Miliana, Médéa, and Sour El-Ghozlane (Aumale).

D. Racial Discrimination:

The colonial administration established a specific system (semi-urban and semi-rural) according to its own design. Urban development derived its roots from the destruction of Algerian rural life and the creation of a class-based society in which moral and human values were eroded through the dismantling of the social structure³⁷.

The social and cultural conditions of Algerians did not improve due to:

The consolidation of a colonial economic approach based on the plundering of Algeria's resources, generating significant profits, revenues, and wealth through the use of modern means and equipment to ensure full domination of the Algerian market.

France's reliance on a body of sociologists and anthropologists aligned with the colonial movement, transforming the colonial phenomenon into an inevitable reality that permeated every social and cultural activity.

The issue of living standards is closely linked to all the social problems suffered by the Algerian people during the colonial period from 1830 to 1962, and even beyond independence. However, the suffering of Algerians due to declining living standards intensified during the Liberation Revolution (1954–1962), as a result of colonial policies that destroyed and altered the foundations of Algerian social structure.

Transportation was also a necessity of urban life. Due to disparities in family income, consumption of services reflected these differences clearly. In 1955, the annual consumption per capita among Europeans reached 57,000 francs (including wages of employees), while for Muslims it reached 15,000 francs in urban areas and only 6,000 francs in rural areas.

1.2 Unemployment and Poverty:

Permanent unemployment and the tragic situation of hundreds of thousands of families living on unproductive land and the deprivation of many others, even in more fertile regions such as Kabylia meant that agriculture could barely sustain even a single individual. Added to this was the miserable fate of inhabitants of poor urban neighborhoods.

These factors explain the emergence of a new phenomenon beginning after World War I (1914–1918): the migration of tens of thousands of Algerians in search of work in France. This mass movement came to be known as the “migration of hunger”³⁸, which intensified further during the ongoing war.

The numerical growth of both the Muslim and non-Muslim populations in Algeria reveals a clear imbalance in favor of the Muslim population. In 1856, the population stood at 2,127,019, rising to 3,408,887 in 1906, and 6,756,806 in 1948, then increasing to 7,487,477, reaching its peak in 1954. Around these figures revolves one of the most significant aspects of the “Algerian tragedy”³⁹: a minority that was becoming numerically smaller but remained constantly dominant and increasingly prosperous, in contrast to a majority whose numbers kept growing yet remained subordinate economically and politically. Within this majority, a segment continued to expand while living on the margins. Thus, in 1954, it was possible to find one million people out of 2,300,000 male workers that is, 43.5% either unemployed or underemployed⁴⁰.

Measuring unemployment is particularly difficult, as the unemployed were often engaged in temporary agricultural work or in marginal occupations such as street vending. Most of the available figures are drawn from the work of Pierre Bourdieu, published in 1964 under the title *Work and Workers in Algeria*.

In 1960, 1,585,000 Muslims were employed, while 281,000 were officially unemployed figures that remain subject to doubt. Moreover, statistics often included individuals over the age of 14 who were not working but were actively seeking employment; however, this category did not include young people looking for work who had never previously held a job⁴¹. Therefore, as an initial approximation, it is more appropriate to consider only “secure” jobs that is, all employment excluding those in trade and agriculture which amounted to about 901,000 individuals.

Unemployment in Algeria was characterized primarily by the following features⁴²:

a. Its permanence:

According to a report by De Lavignette, “even when the Algerian economy experiences favorable conditions, its current structure is incapable of absorbing the

surplus of active population continuously entering the labor market due to the steady increase in births.”

b. Its specificity:

This made it more complex than ordinary unemployment. Algeria experienced what is known as disguised unemployment, where workers were unable to utilize their labor power under normal and productive conditions. This situation of “non-employment” included even skilled workers who could not find jobs. It affected nearly 3 million young people⁴³, with particularly catastrophic proportions in rural areas. Discriminatory policies allowed the European population to largely avoid such conditions.

In any case, the situation worsened year after year, as reflected in the funds allocated to public works programs aimed at absorbing unemployment (in millions of francs):

1950–1951: 100

1951–1952: 172

1952–1953: 250

1953–1954: 400

1954–1955: 800 million francs

Marcel Egrotod adds that the overall unemployment situation in Algeria⁴⁴ was as follows: approximately 1.6 million unemployed, and more than 550,000 partially unemployed. In total, there were more than 2.1 million Muslim workers experiencing either total or partial unemployment. This represented about two-thirds (2/3) of the active Muslim population in both rural and urban areas, estimated at approximately 3.15 million individuals in 1954.

However, as noted by De Lavignette, it was difficult to precisely anticipate the effective use of these allocated funds, stating: “so that municipalities do not use these funds for tasks that normally fall within their regular responsibilities”⁴⁵.

In addition, the agricultural sector employed 1,294,000 workers, while the commercial sector employed 287,000 workers. In agriculture, labor was generally considered to be underutilized by about 50%, yielding approximately 750,000 effectively active workers. In trade, underemployment was estimated at around 10%, or 260,000 effectively active workers. Thus, from a total of 1,811,000 workers, subtracting 370,000 foreign workers leaves approximately 1,450,000 Algerian workers. This reflects, with slight variation, the situation of males aged between 16 and 65 experiencing underemployment roughly one-third of the adult male population⁴⁶.

What struck observers more than anything else was the high proportion of men without any trade or employment, as well as the number of unemployed in the strict sense that is, men and women who had previously performed paid work. The 1954 statistics recorded only 133,000 unemployed out of 584,000 individuals engaged in non-agricultural occupations⁴⁷, representing approximately 23%. However, if we consider only those unemployed within the 450,000 individuals of working age in the wage-earning urban sector, the number reaches 130,000 unemployed, or more than 28%.

The number of unemployed and inactive individuals continued to increase due to the rural exodus toward cities and their accumulation on the outskirts in what became known as “shantytowns.” This permanent unemployment further aggravated by the lack of work for youth and newly displaced rural populations explains the depth and expansion of the sub-proletariat within urban society. In contrast to 72,000 skilled and unskilled workers, there were 146,000 ordinary urban laborers, along with a roughly equivalent number of unemployed.

Despite the importance of domestic service especially among women (20,000 cleaners and 3,200 domestic servants) there remained a large number of families with no stable income, surviving on temporary activities such as street vending, occasional guarding, or short-term work. A field survey conducted on a given day revealed that 84.5% of families whose heads were unemployed or inactive had no source of income in medium-sized cities, while the proportion reached 65.2% in large cities.

If the indebted proletariat composed of seasonal and intermittent workers, unemployed individuals, and small itinerant traders represented the most deprived class among urban populations (excluding the disabled who survived by begging), then the responsibility for “unemployment” and lack of work though the distinction between the two was not clearly recognized except among those who had worked in France was often attributed, consciously or unconsciously, to the ill will of Europeans “who enjoyed employment.” This reflected the general sentiment among members of this class⁴⁸.

It was widely agreed almost unanimously⁴⁹ that the right to work was denied to Algerians. Nevertheless, they relied on the labor of their children, especially in traditional social settings, where children had obligations toward their parents and benefited from extended family solidarity. In reality, the unemployed and inactive survived only thanks to contributions from other family members, and even distant relatives. The work of women and children was not merely supplementary income; it was sometimes the only source of livelihood. For this reason, major cities attracted more rural unemployed individuals who had been dispossessed of their lands⁵⁰,

particularly because of the greater availability of female and secondary employment opportunities.

Under such conditions, migration inevitably spread. The rural unemployed were drawn to cities, forming what was often a concentrated urban proletariat in suburban shantytowns. Many eventually chose a final solution: migration to the “metropole” (France). Approximately 300,000 individuals took this path. Due to their lack of skills, they were generally confined to hard labor (out of 155,000 workers, 115,000 were unskilled) or subjected to exploitation by contractors who disregarded labor laws, or even to new forms of unemployment (more than 12,000 of them without stable work). Meanwhile, municipalities were gradually depopulated, as it was estimated that one out of every seven adult men (aged 20–59) resided in the metropole, with even higher proportions in certain regions⁵¹.

Finally, Colette and Francis Jeanson observed that it is not surprising that Algerian unemployed workers reacted with hostility to the project of bringing in 200,000 Italian workers. Such immigration could only worsen the situation, especially considering the arrival of 4,000 Spaniards in 1954, bringing the total to 10,000 since 1951, driven out of their own country by poverty⁵².

Conclusion:

The contradiction in statistical data is clearly evident in the official reports of the colonial administration. The objective is well known: to conceal the truth and obscure the crimes committed against the Algerian people, especially during the Algerian War of Liberation (1954–1962). It is also noticeable that statistical tables do not explicitly mention the term “Algerians” as they do “Europeans,” but instead use the designation “Muslims,” thereby avoiding reference to the Algerian identity of the true owners of the land.

The rapid increase in the Algerian population after World War II (1939–1945), combined with the concentration of wealth and land in the hands of settlers, led to widespread poverty and a rise in unemployment. This, in turn, fueled discontent and resentment, pushing many young people to join the Liberation Revolution. Algerians were among the youngest and fastest-growing populations in the world⁵³. In 1954, about 50% were under the age of twenty, a phenomenon that points to a serious educational problem. Around 5% were over sixty, while the remaining 45% were between twenty and sixty. From the 1930s onward, demographic growth among the indigenous population began to be perceived as a threat to the French presence in particular and the European presence in general, eventually becoming a concern even for France itself.

Pervasive poverty played a major role in fueling the Algerian Revolution. France, which had exploited Algeria's wealth for its own interests, deprived the Algerian people of the resources of their own land. It was widely acknowledged that Algeria was rich and capable of producing surplus wealth. A French expert in agricultural affairs who visited Algeria in 1953 stated: "Algeria could support forty million inhabitants; how then can poverty be so widespread and unemployment so prevalent?"⁵⁴.

Unemployment spread dramatically across Algeria and continued to worsen daily: there were no jobs in government institutions, nor employment opportunities in the fields. Colonialism ultimately pushed Algerians toward marginalization, even corruption and social disintegration.

As a result of this "infernal policy" aimed at impoverishing Algerian youth, French colonial authorities brought in European labor, leading to a situation in which the number of unemployed and impoverished Algerians exceeded four million, nearly half of Algerian society. This reality helped crystallize the idea of revolution in the minds of the youth⁵⁵.

Due to colonial policies designed to impoverish the Algerian population, many were forced to migrate to cities. By 1954, about 18% of the population lived in urban areas, many residing in shantytowns or makeshift huts. Others crossed the Mediterranean to France in search of work and shelter, reaching approximately 400,000 Algerians in France by 1955⁵⁶. The gap⁵⁷ between Europeans and Algerians was vast and continued to widen economically, despite official 1954 statistics indicating a total population of 9,528,000, including 8,486,000 Algerians and 1,042,000 Europeans. However, it is understood that the number of Algerians was deliberately underestimated in these statistics for political reasons⁵⁸.

Class-based racism permeated all aspects of French colonial policy: housing, employment, education, agricultural land, credit access, and more. Priority was always given to the French and European settlers, followed by those loyal to colonial rule, and then by World War II veterans who had served in the French army.

This class-based racism became particularly evident during the Algerian War of Liberation (1954–1962), as it was used as a tool to attract Algerian youth and prevent them from joining the ranks of the National Liberation Army (ALN) or supporting the objectives of the National Liberation Front (FLN). Yet, it proved impossible for the colonial power to silence the waves of liberation, as history itself bears witness.

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¹ Olivier Le Cour Grandmaison: *Colonialism and Extermination: Reflections on War and the Colonial State*, Special Edition, Ministry of Mujahideen, Algeria, 2007, p. 352.

² This can be observed through numerous facts embodied in legal decrees issued by the colonial administration. For example, within the civil administrative system applied since 1870, three types of municipalities can be identified: municipalities with full powers (CPE), mixed municipalities (CM), and indigenous municipalities (CI).

³ GGA, *Annuaire statistique de l’Algérie*, 1954, p. 20.

⁴ GGA, *Annuaire statistique de l’Algérie*, 1961, p. 19.

⁵ A careful examination of these French names assigned to the suburbs of the three major departments raises several questions. Some municipalities are listed under regions different from what is commonly known—for example Jijel, Guelma, El Kala, and Biskra are listed under the Oran department, whereas in reality El Kala is in eastern Algeria and Biskra in southern Algeria, especially after independence. This leads to questions about administrative restructuring. We also note the repetition of some municipality names in Arabic with different French names, such as (Stora) and (Philippeville) referring to Skikda. The name “Stora” derives from the Bay of Stora, known since the Roman period. See:

Sinus Vunidicus: *Hommes et Migrations*, *Liste des communes d’Algérie*, Paris, 1976, p. 29.

⁶ Taking into account the populations associated with hydrocarbon exploration and exploitation companies, as well as workers in major public works projects, while excluding military personnel. See:

GGA, *Annuaire statistique de l’Algérie*, 1961, p. 24.

⁷ Abou El Kacem Saadallah: *Cultural History of Algeria*, Vol. 10 (1954–1962), Dar El Bassaer, Algeria, 2007, p. 26.

⁸ Kamal Kateb: *Europeans, Natives, and Jews in Algeria (1930–1960)*, trans. Ramadan Zebdi, Dar Al-Ma‘rifa, Algeria, 2001, p. 330.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 334.

¹⁰ Abdelhamid Zouzou: *Milestones in the History of Algeria*, Dar Houma, Algeria, 2004, pp. 310–311.

¹¹ Yahia Bouaziz: *Algerian Revolutions in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, Vol. 3, FLN Documents (1954–1962), Part II, Dar El Gharb, Oran, 2005, p. 179.

¹² We are dealing with a demographic phenomenon leading to a massive population increase, rarely paralleled in history or in the modern world. A mixture of Mediterranean-origin populations can be observed, including:

1833: 7,800 Europeans

1840: 27,000 Europeans

1847: 110,000 Europeans

Among the 110,000 Europeans:

47,000 French

63,000 foreigners (mostly of Mediterranean origin):

8,700 Maltese

85,000 Italians

1,000 Spaniards

8,600 Germans or Swiss

Ferri, Louis: *L’Algérie c’est d’abord l’Algérie*, 2nd edition, Algiers, 2017, pp. 51–52.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 180.

¹⁴ Ferri, Louis: *L’Algérie c’est d’abord l’Algérie*, op. cit., p. 54.

¹⁵ Since settlers first set foot in Algeria, they occupied the most fertile agricultural lands and the best residential areas, encouraged by Marshal Clauzel on August 10, 1830, through attractive offers granting them ownership of the most fertile lands of their choosing.

¹⁶ Karim Ould Ennabiya: *Demographic Stakes in the Region of Sidi Bel Abbès (1830–1954)*, Dar El Rachad, Algeria, 2005, p. 75.

¹⁷ Djamel Kharchi: *Colonisation et Politique d’assimilation en Algérie 1830–1962*, Casbah Edition, Algiers, 2004, p. 459.

¹⁸ Number of persons regrouped in temporary or permanent centers during 1961:

Region	Date	New Settlements (Centers)	Temporary Camps (Centers)	Total Centers	New Settlements (People)	Temporary Camps (People)	Total People	%
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Algiers Region

| Algiers | Jan 1, 1961 | 399 | 643 | 1,042 | 320,286 | 410,681 | 730,976 | 22.5 |

| Algiers | Apr 1, 1961 | 553 | 512 | 1,047 | 407,413 | 344,870 | 752,296 | 23.2 |

Oran Region

| Oran | Jan 1, 1961 | 343 | 256 | 599 | 283,353 | 191,729 | 475,082 | 22.3 |

| Oran | Apr 1, 1961 | 407 | 201 | 608 | 315,118 | 166,340 | 481,458 | 22.6 |

Constantine Region

| Constantine | Jan 1, 1961 | 421 | 318 | 739 | 423,512 | 238,984 | 662,496 | 18.3 |

| Constantine | Apr 1, 1961 | 380 | 357 | 737 | 447,852 | 276,723 | 724,575 | 20.0 |

Algeria (Total)

| Algeria | Jan 1, 1961 | 1,163 | 1,217 | 2,380 | 1,027,551 | 841,394 | 1,868,549 | 20.8 |

| Algeria | Apr 1, 1961 | 1,322 | 1,070 | 2,392 | 1,070,338 | 787,919 | 1,958,302 | 21.7 |

Source: Michel Cornaton: *Les camps de regroupement de la guerre d'Algérie*, L'Harmattan, Paris, 1998, p. 121.

¹⁹ Karim Ould Ennabiya, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

²⁰ Djilali Sari: *La dépossession des fellahs 1830–1962*, S.N.E.D, Algiers, 1975, p. 110.

²¹ Robert Aron: *Les Origines de la Guerre d'Algérie*, FAYARD, Paris, 1962, p. 217.

²² ARON, Robert: *Les Origines de la Guerre d'Algérie*, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

²³ It is worth noting here the intelligence and skill of Algerian diplomats, who worked to repatriate refugees before the referendum in order to influence its outcome in favor of Algerian independence. Indeed, Article 4 of the Evian Accords stipulated that French forces would not withdraw from border positions until the self-determination referendum held on July 1, 1962. To achieve this objective, the Provisional Government, headquartered in Boumerdès, established a joint Algerian-French commission to facilitate the return of refugees to their homes, their reintegration into national life, and the resumption of their activities in Algeria. See:

Benyoucef Ben Khedda: *The Evian Accords*, trans. Lahcen Zegdar and Mohal El Aïn Djebaili, University Publications Office, Algeria, 1987, p. 89.

²⁴ Ammar Bouhouche: *The Political History of Algeria from the Beginning...*, Dar El Bassaer, Algeria, 1997, pp. 549–550.

²⁵ Mohamed Ghribi: *Social and Cultural Conditions in the Department of Oran (1945–1962)*, Doctoral thesis in History, Djilali Liabes University, Sidi Bel Abbès, p. 308.

²⁶ Ahmed Mehsas: *Colonial Realities and Resistance*, Special Edition, Ministry of Mujahideen, Dar Al-Ma'rifa, Algeria, 2007, p. 110.

²⁷ ARON, Robert: *Les Origines de la Guerre d'Algérie*, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

²⁸ GGA, *Annuaire Statistique de l'Algérie*, 1961, p. 33.

²⁹ Since 1959, 16 municipalities were added to the list of urban municipalities, along with the establishment of statistical bulletins for civil status records concerning the Muslim population. The first series of the table above relates to the twenty administrative centers that preceded the departments and districts.

³⁰ The reason appears clear from the harassment Algerians were subjected to and the interrogations related to the Liberation Revolution in exchange for receiving medical treatment, under the supervision of the SAS (Sections Administratives Spécialisées).

³¹ *El Moudjahid*, No. 40, April 24, 1959.

³² Ammar Bouhouche: *Algerian Workers in France*, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

³³ Distribution of income among the population in Algeria in 1951:

Social Class	Individual Income	Muslims	Europeans	Total
Traditional Agriculture	15,750	5,840,000	—	5,840,000
Urban Muslim Population	42,350	1,600,000	—	1,600,000
Commercial Sector & Small Employees	84,000	510,000	440,000	950,000
Middle Class	175,700	50,000	545,000	595,000
Elite Class	1,113,350	—	15,000	15,000
Total	—	8,000,000	1,000,000	9,000,000

Source: Ammar Bouhouche: *Algerian Workers in France*, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

³⁴ For example, in 1953 Europeans obtained loans estimated at 43.4 billion francs, compared to only 2 billion francs for Algerians. In the non-agricultural sector, the European minority included major traders (around 10,000 individuals, forming the backbone of the French

colonial system in Algeria), in addition to small and medium industrialists, craftsmen, and members of the repressive apparatus (about 150,000 individuals). Then came workers and employees, who represented 53% of the European working minority, numbering about 170,000. See:

Yahia Bouaziz: *Algerian Revolutions in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, Vol. 3, FLN Documents (1954–1962), Dar El Gharb, Oran, 2005, pp. 183–184.

³⁵ Ammar Bouhouche: *Algerian Workers in France*, 2nd ed., National Publishing and Distribution Company, Algeria, 1979, p. 155.

³⁶ Benjamin Stora: *Histoire de l'Algérie coloniale 1830–1954*, ENAL, Algiers, 1996, pp. 101–102.

³⁷ El Houari Addi: *French Colonialism in Algeria: The Policy of Economic and Social Disintegration (1830–1960)*, 1st ed., trans. Joseph Abdullah, Dar Al-Hadatha, Lebanon, 1983, p. 17.

³⁸ Marcel Egretaud: *Réalité de la nation Algérienne*, Éditions Sociales, Paris, 1961, pp. 154–155.

³⁹ This situation pushed rural populations toward migration, leading landless peasants to move toward the metropole (France) in search of work. However, as noted by “Gendarme,” the number of Algerians in France increased from 111,469 in June 1948 to 280,448 in September 1954, while the percentage of Algerians engaged in stable employment declined from 76% to 55% over the same period.

⁴⁰ Slimane Cheikh: *Algeria Takes Up Arms: A Study of the National Movement and Armed Revolution*, trans. Mohamed Hafez El Jamali, Publications of the 40th Anniversary of Independence, 2002, p. 169.

⁴¹ Denis Clerc: *Economie de l'Algérie*, Les Cahiers de la Formation Administrative, Annaba, 1975, p. 44.

⁴² Colette and Francis Jeanson: *L'Algérie Hors la Loi*, ENAG, SAD Collection, Algiers, 1993, p. 191.

⁴³ It is not easy to count Algerian unemployed persons, even in official circles. Estimates range between 250,000, 1 million, and 1.5 million. This lack of precision is unsurprising, as statistics are necessarily incomplete. Current census legislation assigns municipal committees to count unemployment, yet such committees exist in only one out of ten municipalities. Moreover, wherever statistics exist, they clearly underestimate reality: unemployed individuals receiving no benefits have no incentive to register, and unemployed women are never counted.

⁴⁴ Marcel Egretaud: *Réalité de la nation Algérienne*, op. cit., p. 152.

⁴⁵ Colette and Francis Jeanson: *L'Algérie Hors la Loi*, op. cit., p. 192.

⁴⁶ Denis Clerc: *Economie de l'Algérie*, op. cit., p. 44.

⁴⁷ Charles-Robert Ageron: *History of Contemporary Algeria from the 1871 Uprising to the Outbreak of the War of Liberation (1954)*, trans. group of researchers, Vol. 2, 1st ed., Dar El Oumma, Algeria, 2008, p. 855.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 856.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 857.

⁵⁰ Djilali Sari: *La dépossession des fellahs 1830–1962*, op. cit., p. 100.

⁵¹ The same applies to several municipalities in the Kabylia region, where, according to a recent government survey, 5 out of 10 men were absent.

⁵² Colette and Francis Jeanson: *L'Algérie Hors la Loi*, op. cit., pp. 192–193.

⁵³ Salah Ferkous: *History of Algeria from Prehistory to Independence*, Dar Al-'Oloum, Annaba, 2005, p. 423.

⁵⁴ Ahmed El Khatib: *The Algerian Revolution*, Dar Al-'Ilm, 1st ed., Beirut, 1958, p. 144.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

⁵⁶ Joann Ghilési: *Revolutionary Algeria*, Arabic trans. Khairi Hammad, Dar Al-Tali'a, Beirut, 1st ed., New York, 1960, p. 43.

⁵⁷ "The Bon Year" or "rationing system" (Le Bon): a system of distributing consumer goods to individuals through vouchers (a copy exists in the Mujahid Museum, Sidi Bel Abbès). Each person received a fixed share, such as 250 grams of bread or wheat per day, though distribution was irregular. In rural areas, the monthly ration of barley decreased from 7.5 kg to 4.5 kg. According to the Confederation of Trade Unions in Algeria, agricultural workers received only 5 kg of wheat every 15 days, instead of the 9 kg stipulated by the decree of July 4, 1944, without consideration of family size. Given the extremely low wages of agricultural workers, many could not even afford their allocated rations. For example, wages rarely exceeded 144 francs, while the price of basic goods was high: chickpeas cost 100 francs/kg, beans 180 francs/kg, and semolina 78 francs/kg. Many were unable to purchase even their monthly ration of 7.5 kg of cereals.

⁵⁸ Joann Ghilési: *Revolutionary Algeria*, op. cit., p. 423.