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The difficult relationship between the negative demographic curve in Europe, the positive demographic curve in Africa and National Security

Abstract

The aim of this article is to expose the consequences for the Spanish State and for its national security related to the decrease of population in the Mediterranean region and to answer the following questions:

What consequences will the demographic decline have in Spain and in the Mediterranean region for the national and the European security? How will a limited security system be able to contrast the growing demographic curve in Africa and its threats? What kind of solutions could be implemented?

It is unquestionable that the negative demographic curve in Mediterranean Europe, side effect of a lack of generational change and the aging of the population, will expose the national security to a high level of stress. Likewise, the decrease in the active population and the increase of elderly population will entail a change in the structure of the Welfare State, but, but even more so, in relation to the services that the state will be able to effectively provide, taking into account the factors described above, and the economic resources available.

On the other hand, Europe, in particular the Mediterranean region, will have to face the consequences of the positive African demographic

curve (+215%), and, therefore will face greater migratory flows; direct consequence of the structural fragility that the African continent continues to present and that prevents it from evolving towards human and industrial well-being and development.

Keywords

Demographic decline, immigration, Africa, Sahel, National Security, organized crime, jihadism, new powers.

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Introduction

Over the last four decades, all successive governments have had to deal with the complex situation of pension reform, see the Moncloa Pacts of 1977 and their successor, the Toledo Pact of 1995.

Today, just like yesterday, all the pacts or reforms have reached a common conclusion: the unsustainability of the system.

In this sense, the contribution made by Alonso Olea¹ in relation to the Social Security financial crisis is illustrative when he points out that:

“Since the middle of the period 1971-1980, this problem has been getting increasingly worse, its main contributing factors being the reduction of employment —most crudely the increase in forced unemployment— creating time increases expenditures and depletes available resources, and the gradual ageing of the population which increases the cost of pensions”.

State administrators have seen and continue to see the problem of pensions from a single point of view: that of the disbursement that this entails; above all, according to the pressures and calls for cuts from Brussels, but the direct and collateral effects that the ageing population has on the country's defence and national security is not being assessed whatsoever.

Thus, if the issue of pensions were to be extrapolated to the fields of defence and national security, it could provide a crucial overview if we are to anticipate the challenges that security and defence will face in the coming decades.

The aim of this paper is not to address the issue of the national or European pension system and attempt to provide a solution, but to use the salient data to shine a light in an apparently secondary direction.

The pension system in history: A tool for analysis

History is a valuable tool for use in an intelligence analysis context, since knowledge of past events facilitates the understanding of a current situation, whether it be by chronology or by analogy. Knowing how a particular situation has arisen is fundamental to narrowing down the problem, and therefore, in this paper, we rely on historiographical and quantitative data to give a scope of the problem, and to provide both an overview and the most detailed global analysis possible.

History shows that pension systems have been known since the time of the Roman Empire.

¹ Olea, M. A. (1983). *Instituciones de Seguridad Social*. Editorial Civitas. P. 27.

The Roman system foresaw the *condition sine qua non*, that in order for the legionary to be eligible for the benefit, he had to survive a twenty-five-year stay in the service of the army, after which the reward granted, for these twenty-five years, consisted of a piece of land situated by custom in the place of the legionary's last posting, and the equivalent of twelve years' pay.

It is easy to imagine the shout of joy that the legionary must have produced upon reaching this goal, in fact, the term retirement comes from the Latin *jubilare*, that is, to shout for joy.

The link between the present moment in history and the period of the Roman Empire, which is interesting to note for the purposes of this paper, is that, even during the splendour of Rome, there were periods in which the pension system had encountered difficulties in paying the pensions of its legionaries.

Undoubtedly, the Roman scenario is distant in time and the causes of non-payment have little to do with the current European scenario, but it serves to demonstrate that the pension system has always been the Achilles' heel of societies.

As has already been shown at the beginning of this paper, the literature on the pension system in Spain is extensive, and for the purpose of this paper, we will make use of the document published in 2017 by the Bank of Spain entitled: *The Spanish Public Pension System: Current Situation, Challenges and Reform Alternatives*.

By way of clarification, at no time does this article seek to undermine the content of the document published by the Bank of Spain, but rather to use the information, it contains to extrapolate it and facilitate an analysis or interpretation of the data in terms of national defence and national security.

In the summary of the Bank of Spain's paper, the authors of the paper argue that the deterioration of the pension system had its origin in:

“The Spanish Social Security System's deficit reached 1.5% of GDP in 2015, which contrasts with the surplus observed before the economic crisis, of 2.2% of GDP in 2007. This deterioration is mainly due to an increase in contributory pension expenditure (as a % of GDP), as a result of an increase in the dependency ratio, an increase in the pension replacement rate and a fall in the employment rate. Beyond this short-term situation, the Spanish public pension system, like those of the rest of the developed countries, faces important challenges caused by the expectation of a significant increase in longevity and, consequently, in the proportion of the population of retirement age”².

2 Hernandez de Cos, P., Jimeno, J. F. and Ramos, R. (2017). National Bank of Spain. Doc. 2017. The Spanish Public Pension System: Current Situation, Challenges and Reform Alternatives. Occasional Papers. No. 1701.

The authors of the document also point out that the Spanish system is mainly based on three factors: demographics, the labour market and the relationship between the average pension and the average productivity of the economy.

For the purposes of this article, we will treat all the factors as a single factor, but more emphasis will be given to the demographic and labour market factors, as the results of other research in these fields have yielded data that are relevant to the objective of this paper, namely the future of defence and national security.

The Bank of Spain document refers to the demographic factor only from the point of view of the ageing and longevity of society, but, unfortunately, at no point does it explicitly mention that, in the medium and long term, the lack of generational replacement could be the factor that makes meeting pension payments impossible.

Likewise, as will be shown later, the decline in the actual population will affect the number of the working population that will have to bear the cost of maintaining the national welfare system in terms of taxes.

The Spanish and European demographic curve

According to the results of research carried out by the scientific community of “*The Lancet*” in October 2020³, and as can be seen in Table nº1⁴, in Spain the peak population was reached in 2019 with a total of 46.43 million and it is estimated that in the 2040-2050 period, Spain will suffer a decrease in its population of 30-40%, while in the period 2060-2080, Spain will have 50% less of its current population, which leaves the Spanish population at around 22.91 million, of which 50% will be over 65 years of age. In other words, in less than eighty years, taking the scenario of 2100 as a reference, Spain will face a completely new social scenario.

The Spanish demographic problem is not an isolated phenomenon, far from it, as the trend is being replicated equally in all regions of Europe⁵ as can be seen in Table I.

Population decline, but above all the ageing of the population will lead to changes in fiscal, social and health care structures, industrial processes, business models and

3 Stein Emil, V. et al. (2020). Fertility, mortality, migration, and population scenarios for 195 countries and territories from 2017 to 2100: a forecasting analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study. *Global Health Metric*. Vol. 396, October 2020.

4 Table 1- Global metrics. Vol.296, October 2020, p.1290.

5 Stein Emil, V. et al. (2020). Fertility, mortality, migration, and population scenarios for 195 countries and territories from 2017 to 2100: a forecasting analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study. *Global Health Metric*. Vol. 396, October 2020.

<http://ghdx.healthdata.org>

of course in the area of national defence and national security, and of course also in European security.

	Population (millions)			Peak population (year)	Total Fertility Rate		
	2017	2100 reference scenario	2100 SGD pace scenario		2017	2100 reference scenario	2100 SGD pace scenario
High-income							
North America	360.88(324.44-398.6)	379.95(282.96-509.77)	322.69(244.94-432.12)	408.40(2064)	1.79(1.65-1.95)	1.54(1.13-2.03)	1.40(1.03-1.86)
Canada	35.98(33.92-38.59)	44.09(36.09-53.16)	37.06(32.09-43.28)	45.17(2078)	1.66(1.42-1.94)	1.58(1.29-1.90)	1.37(1.12-1.64)
Greenland	0.06(0.06-0.06)	0.05(0.03-0.07)	0.03(0.02-0.05)	0.06(2039)	2.02(1.79-2.26)	1.52(1.08-2.06)	1.29(0.99-1.79)
USA	324.84(288.6-362.83)	335.81(247.53-456.32)	286.59(215.82-385.94)	362.75(2062)	1.81(1.68-1.95)	1.53(1.1-2.02)	1.40(1.02-1.86)
Sur America	65.61(60.27-70.62)	66.50(46.02-93.09)	55.32(38.37-78.46)	78.02(2057)	2.06(1.9-2.25)	1.58(1.14-2.06)	1.48(1.05-1.98)
Argentina	44.27(39.11-49.25)	48.27(31.99-70.54)	39.62(26.4-57.99)	54.59(2062)	2.17(2.02-2.33)	1.62(1.14-2.13)	1.51(1.04-2.06)
Chile	19.92(16.67-19.08)	15.52(11.73-20.64)	13.43(10.59-17.41)	20.29(2046)	1.81(1.59-2.06)	1.37(1.04-1.78)	1.29(1.01-1.68)
Uruguay	3.42(3.06-3.77)	2.71(2.07-3.51)	2.27(1.77-2.92)	3.60(2042)	1.97(1.72-2.27)	1.44(1.16-1.76)	1.37(1.08-1.70)
Western Europe	432.97(420.94-445.9)	374.39(303.66-465.27)	329.75(270.49-410.49)	447.92(2038)	1.59(1.43-1.78)	1.64(1.28-2.05)	1.50(1.16-1.88)
Andorra	0.08(0.08-0.08)	0.03(0.03-0.04)	0.03(0.03-0.04)	0.08(2021)	1.20(1.06-1.35)	1.23(1.02-1.50)	1.17(1.0-1.44)
Austria	8.79(8.73-8.86)	6.58(5.22-8.37)	6.01(4.83-7.60)	9.07(2033)	1.51(1.38-1.66)	1.37(1.02-1.76)	1.31(1.00-1.71)
Belgium	11.32(11.23-11.41)	13.48(10.41-17.46)	11.57(9.08-14.8)	13.63(2084)	1.69(1.52-1.87)	1.60(1.21-2.06)	1.46(1.05-1.9)
Cyprus	1.26(1.14-1.39)	0.79(0.66-1.00)	0.76(0.64-0.96)	1.37(2038)	1.01(0.87-1.17)	1.18(0.96-1.52)	1.16(0.95-1.49)
Denmark	5.73(5.68-5.78)	6.06(4.17-8.66)	4.88(3.66-6.96)	6.24(2071)	1.75(1.57-1.95)	1.66(1.08-2.31)	1.39(0.99-1.98)
Finland	5.52(5.47-5.56)	5.24(4.04-6.70)	4.59(3.61-5.83)	5.73(2038)	1.64(1.47-1.83)	1.60(1.22-2.01)	1.47(1.1-1.85)
France	65.71(59.68-71.56)	67.15(53.33-85.37)	60.13(47.63-76.53)	70.64(2046)	1.84(1.66-2.05)	1.78(1.42-2.20)	1.65(1.28-2.07)
Germany	83.29(74.7-92.02)	66.42(53.96-80.86)	60.06(49.98-72.53)	85.08(2035)	1.39(1.24-1.57)	1.35(1.05-1.69)	1.26(1.0-1.58)
Greece	10.40(9.3-11.47)	5.48(4.07-7.64)	4.73(3.78-6.5)	10.40(2017)	1.42(1.27-1.6)	1.29(0.97-1.82)	1.19(0.97-1.68)
Iceland	0.34(0.33-0.34)	0.38(0.25-0.56)	0.32(0.21-0.49)	0.40(2063)	1.83(1.68-2.40)	1.72(1.16-2.40)	1.59(1.04-2.25)
Ireland	4.86(4.52-5.22)	5.44(3.76-8.27)	4.82(3.3-7.29)	5.77(2057)	1.84(1.64-2.07)	1.68(1.1-2.46)	1.57(1.01-2.32)
Israel	8.95(7.82-10.12)	24.07(13.89-41.49)	17.65(10.4-30.45)	24.07(2100)	2.90(2.64-3.19)	2.36(1.45-3.54)	2.05(1.19-3.19)
Italy	60.60(60.15-61.03)	30.54(24.61-39.44)	27.79(23.41-35.51)	60.60(2017)	1.33(1.18-1.5)	1.23(0.99-1.64)	1.17(0.98-1.58)
Luxembourg	0.59(0.59-0.60)	0.71(0.57-0.88)	0.64(0.52-0.79)	0.77(2063)	1.48(1.13-1.9)	1.50(1.13-1.9)	1.39(1.06-1.79)
Malta	0.43(0.43-0.48)	0.29(0.23-0.36)	0.26(0.22-0.33)	0.44(2027)	1.49(1.32-1.68)	1.27(1.0-1.64)	1.21(0.96-1.57)
Netherlands	17.03(16.89-17.18)	13.58(10.59-17.52)	11.15(8.92-13.76)	17.50(2033)	1.66(1.49-1.85)	1.59(1.24-2.01)	1.39(1.06-1.73)
Norway	5.26(5.22-5.31)	7.47(5.15-10.95)	6.47(4.65-9.82)	7.47(2099)	1.74(1.59-1.9)	1.67(1.09-2.35)	1.52(1.02-2.28)
Portugal	10.68(9.34-10.73)	4.50(3.43-6.1)	4.16(3.29-5.68)	10.68(2017)	1.29(1.14-1.48)	1.26(0.98-1.73)	1.21(0.97-1.7)
Spain	46.39(42.86-49.88)	22.91(17.89-32.95)	21.54(17.39-30.84)	46.43(2019)	1.35(1.23-1.49)	1.24(0.96-1.83)	1.21(0.96-1.78)
Sweden	10.04(9.34-10.73)	13.11(9.77-17.63)	10.72(8.2-14.34)	13.11(2100)	1.84(1.69-1.99)	1.72(1.24-2.31)	1.46(1.02-2.01)
Switzerland	8.59(7.91-9.21)	8.33(7.09-9.849)	7.39(6.42-8.52)	9.82(2048)	1.50(1.34-1.67)	1.43(1.17-1.73)	1.28(1.04-1.54)
UK	66.64(60.8-72.58)	71.45(55.76-90.29)	63.74(50.26-82.78)	74.87(2063)	1.73(1.55-1.94)	1.61(1.21-2.04)	1.50(1.13-1.96)

The question of the causes of this population decline can and should be answered on the basis of the TFR or Total Fertility Ratio⁶, which is understood as the level necessary to ensure generational replacement, and which indicates that Spain has an average which is below the level necessary to maintain generational replacement, stipulated at 2.1 children per woman⁷.

As was anticipated above, Spain is not the only country with this negative demographic trend, other similar and symbolic cases due to the decline in its population are Italy, Greece and Portugal.

But how much demographic decline will Spain suffer in the next eighty years?

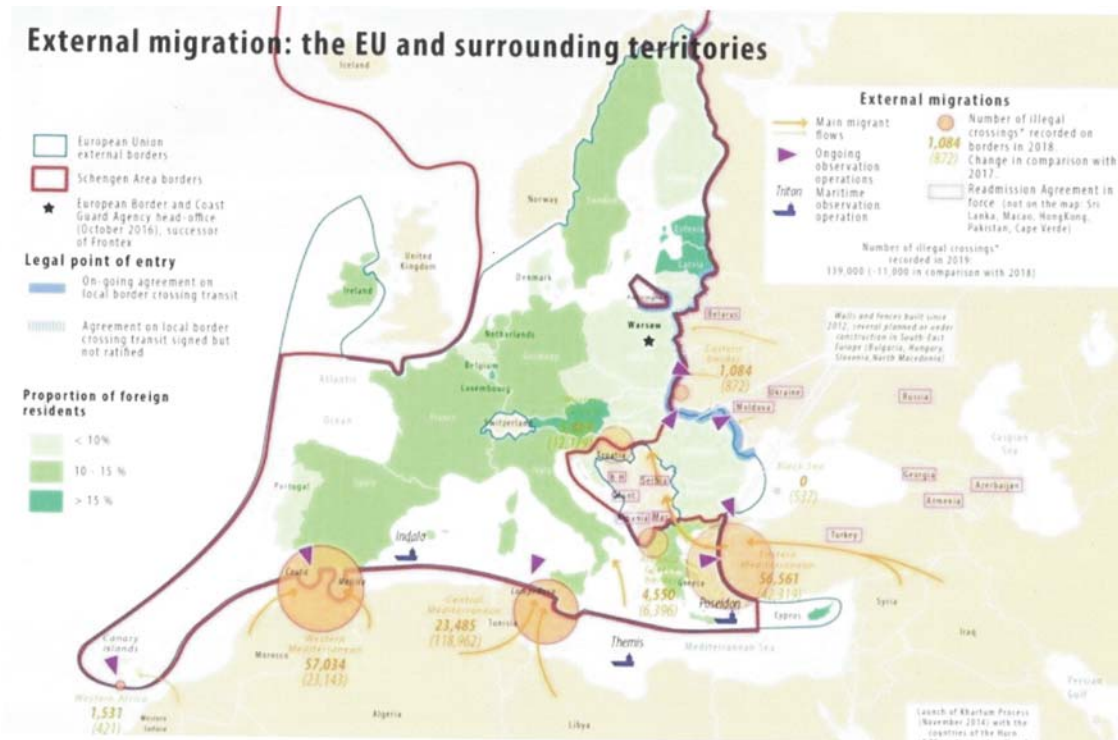
As can be seen in Table I, the worrying trend of a 50% reduction in population is echoed in all the countries mentioned.

This fact should send an alarm signal to the European authorities, since Spain, Italy and Greece are not only the southern borders of Europe⁸, but also, as shown in map 1, the entry areas for clandestine immigration [illegal immigration].

6 Stein Emil, V. et al. (2020). Fertility, mortality, migration, and population scenarios for 195 countries and territories from 2017 to 2100: a forecasting analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study. *Global Health Metric*. Vol. 396, October 2020.

7 http://www.ipfe.org/España/Noticia/España_no_alcanza_el_reemplazo_generacional_desde_hace_35_años

8 Map 1 Source: FRONTEX.



Map 1. Source Frontex

The situation takes on an even less happy outlook, because, at the same time as the European demographic decline, the African continent should reach a peak population estimated at 4.8 billion; expressed numerically, this is equivalent to +215% of the current population of 1.34 billion.⁹ A very important fact, for the purpose of this article, since an increase of +215% represents a challenge for national and European security, and not only because the African continent is less than 15 kilometres away from the national continental borders.

Demographic decline, the longevity of Europe's population and economic consequences

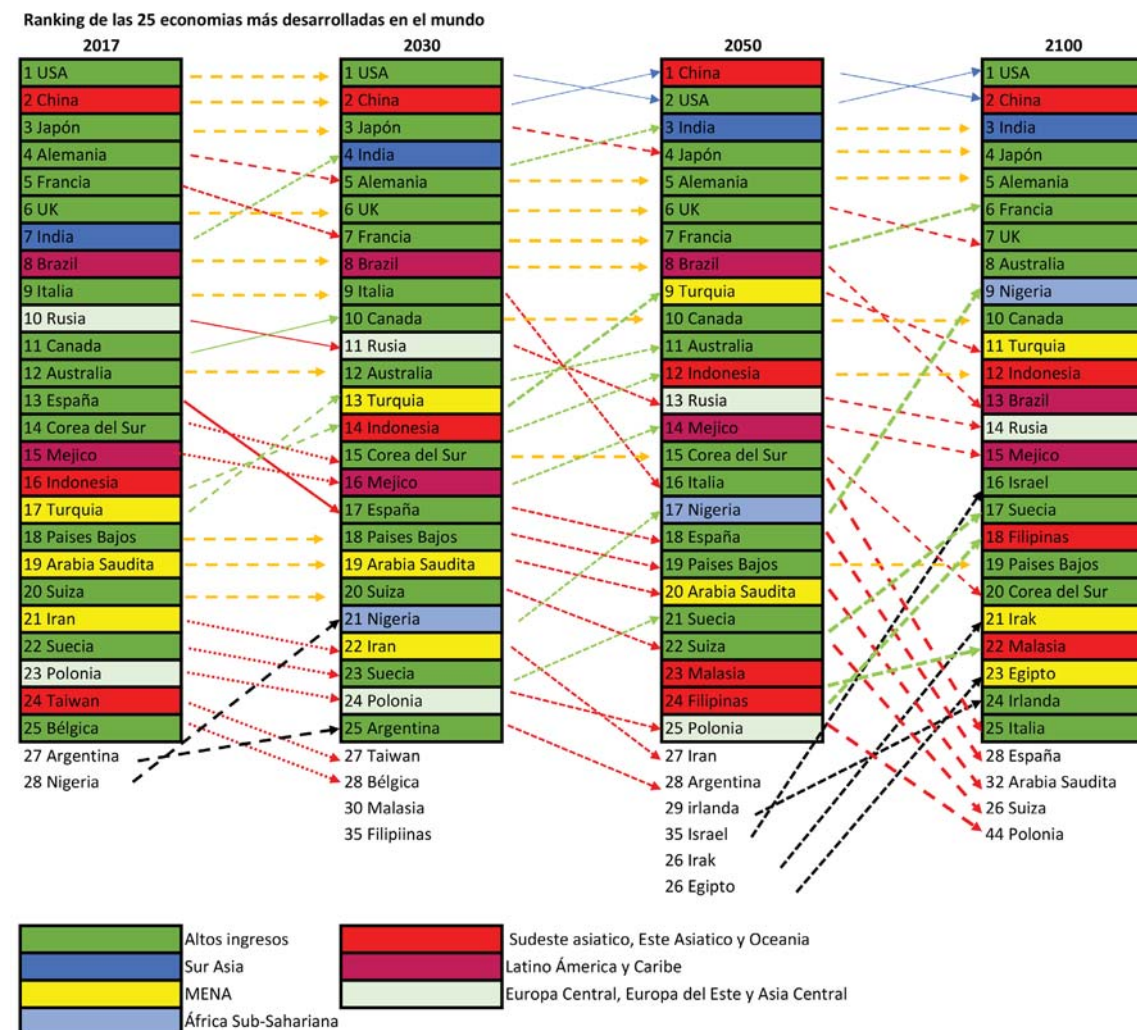
The question we want to answer is the following:

- What effects will the demographic decline have on the national industrial and economic fabric?
- To answer this question, first, it is appropriate to admit that technological advances in robotics will undoubtedly be able to positively and substantially change the trajectory of GDP in the adult-over-65 age group (especially), in Western economies, meaning the economies of technologically developed countries. These technological advances should therefore reduce the “ripple effect” caused by population ageing on the structure of GDP growth, i.e. by making up for the lack of human capital.

⁹ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1224205/forecast-of-the-total-population-of-africa/>

- However, it is undeniable, according to the results of the study of “The Lancet”¹⁰ of October 2020, which reinforces the hypothesis that even with the evolution of technology, Spain will drop in the ranking of the twenty-five most industrialised countries. The origin of this decline is to be found in the decrease in the working population¹¹.
- This suggests that technological innovations will not be able to fully bridge gap in human capital.

It is interesting to note, see table II¹², how in the coming decades, in the period from 2017 to 2100, Spain will go from occupying thirteenth place in the ranking of the world’s top twenty-five economies to occupying twenty-eighth place; in other words,



¹⁰ Stein Emil, V. et al. (2020). Fertility, mortality, migration, and population scenarios for 195 countries and territories from 2017 to 2100: a forecasting analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study. *Global Health Metric*. Vol. 396, October 2020.

¹¹ Stein Emil, V. et al. (2020). Fertility, mortality, migration, and population scenarios for 195 countries and territories from 2017 to 2100: a forecasting analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study. *Global Health Metric*. Vol. 396, October 2020.

¹² Table II (Ranking 25 Top Economies).

the lack of generational replacement and the ageing of society will be responsible for Spain's exit from the list of the world's top twenty-five economies.

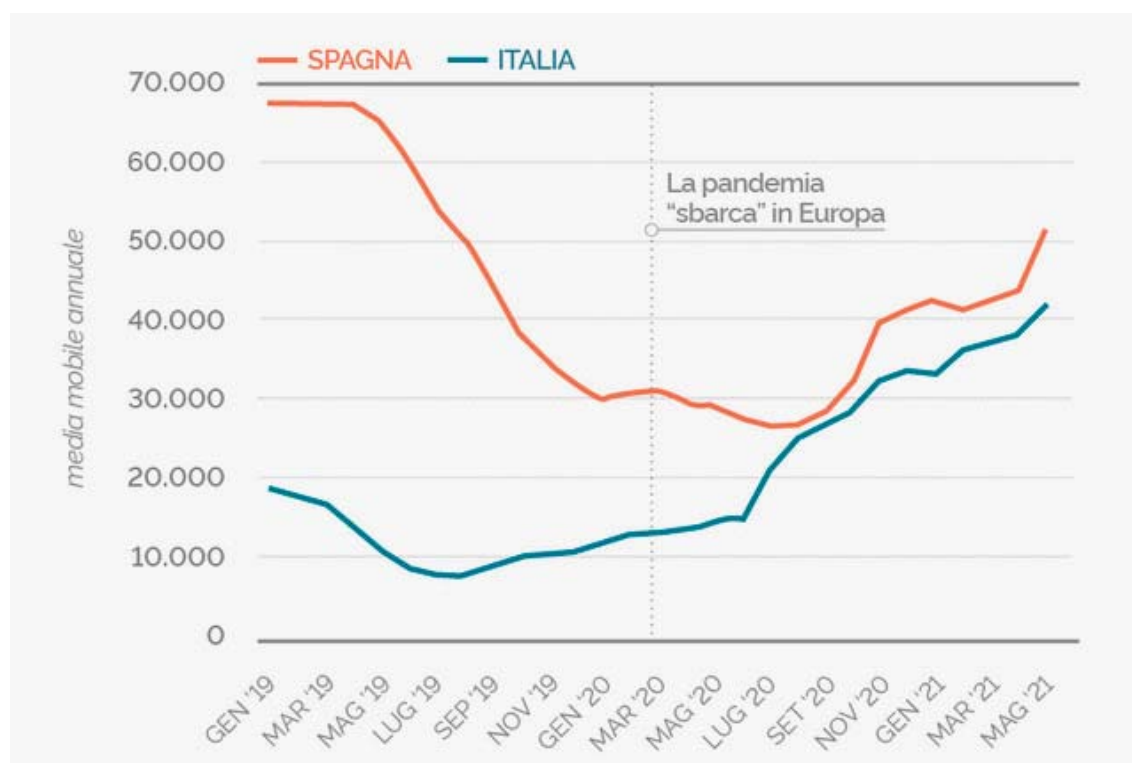
The reduction of GDP by fifteen places in the ranking, gives a less simplistic overall scenario, since this will mean, unless appropriate measures are taken, a reduction in the real possibilities of the State to provide services and distribute economic resources for the country's operation and development.

It is these data together that allow for a different reading and interpretation of the difficulties that the national pension system will face in the medium and long term, since, as has been shown, the direct effect of the lack of generational replacement will lead to a drastic change in the existing national and European social and industrial system, and thus, it can be deduced that it will affect the capacity of the national security system in the same way.

If in the case of developed economies, technological advances have a positive effect, it is equally interesting to observe how the same technological advancement can have a diametrically opposite effect in societies that are technologically less developed.

In this type of society, technological advances tend to have a negative impact, since the growth trajectory depends on the supply of low-cost labour, which is why technological advances can be identified as one of the originating causes of clandestine migration flows and, consequently, a challenge to national security.

On the basis of these data, we can foresee that clandestine migration flows will increase, especially in those countries whose economies have not surpassed a certain level of social and industrial development.



Graph 1

A clear example of the fragility of the African continent can be found in the current cause and effect relationship as a result of the pandemic caused by COVID-19, which has seen an increase in clandestine migrant arrivals by sea¹³ in 2020 and 2021 as shown in graph 1¹⁴.

It is also important to remember that demographic growth implies a reduced capacity of the state to make investments to change the economic trajectory, and likewise, a higher demographic rate is associated with a greater erosion of the social system. In fact, the lack of a professional perspective, the lack of an adequate social system, or both, are among the main causes of immigration, whether it be legal or clandestine.

The result of the initial analysis, based on the data presented so far, highlights the double challenge that not only the lack of human capital, but also the reduction of available and indispensable funds for the implementation of the security system will pose for national security, given that the shortage in the working population will have an impact on the overall State budget and will have a direct effect on the country.

In addition to the lack of human capital and the loss of economic competitiveness, it is necessary to add the ageing and longevity of the population, data that make it easier to read or understand the pension reforms, in terms of age requirements or years worked, which are being implemented in some European countries and which in Spain have recovered the CPI as the norm, driving delayed retirement, among other aspects¹⁵.

For its part, the United Nations in the report “*World Population Ageing 2020 Highlights*”¹⁶, informs us that in 2050 the world will experience a situation in which 1.5 billion people will be over 65 years of age¹⁷, and although the figures may seem exorbitant, we must be aware that in 2020 there were already 727 million people aged 65 or over.

“The world continues to experience a sustained change in the age structure of the population, driven by increasing life expectancy and decreasing levels of fertility. People are living longer lives, and both the share and the number of older people in the total population are increasing rapidly. Globally, there were 727 million persons aged 65 years or over in the world in 2020. Over the next three decades, the global number of older persons

¹³ Annual National Security Report 2020. - Accesible.pdf. National Security Department. P.239.

¹⁴ Graph 1. Source ISPI- Istituto Studi Politica, Milan, Italy.

¹⁵ <https://www.economista.es/economia/noticias/11547047/12/21/La-primera-pata-de-la-reforma-de-pensiones-entra-en-vigor-el-1-de-enero.html>

¹⁶ UNITED NATIONS, DESA. (2020).Report 2020_World_Population_Ageing_Highlights.pdf

¹⁷ UNITED NATIONS, DESA. (2020).Report 2020_World_Population_Ageing_Highlights.pdf

is projected to more than double, reaching over 1.5 billion in 2050. All regions will see an increase in the size of their older population between 2020 and 2050. The share of the global population aged 65 years or over is expected to increase from 9.3 percent in 2020 to 16.0 percent by 2050 (United Nations, 2019) ”.

The table pictured shows that Spain and Europe need an exit strategy to fill the gaps that the effects of demographic decline will have on our societies, since, as has already been demonstrated, technology alone will not be able to make up for the lack of human capital, especially on the board of geopolitics 4.0 which we see emerging.

As mentioned above, the national context is linked to a low birth rate, as shown in Table I, but the consequences in terms of National Security will represent a new challenge for Spanish society as a whole.

This is not to underestimate the potential and benefits that Cyber-security, Killer-drones or EDT (Emerging Disrupting Technologies) systems bring to European societies, but there are very human tasks for which no artificial intelligence has yet been created to take the place of a human operator.

On the other hand, as we have seen over the last decade, except for cyber-crime, the biggest challenges and threats at the European level are, and most likely will continue to be, human beings armed with knives, automatic assault weapons (AK47 or similar) or a simple stolen vehicle that runs over pedestrians on the Ramblas in Barcelona, not to mention the battalion of suicide bombers created by the neo-Taliban government¹⁸.

In the interests of National Security

If the data shown so far were crossed with the factors that contribute to epidemics/pandemics (climate change and the diseases that result from it; demographic growth¹⁹ and illegal immigration, which is the explicit expression of the state fragility of developing countries; trade; economic development and the overuse of medicines in the livestock farming; poverty or social inequality and the collapse of the health system), one would come to the conclusion that all the factors mentioned above lead to consider a timely broadening of the meaning and scope of the term National Security.

18 <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/afghanistan-suicide-bombers-given-key-role-in-new-taliban-army-8rglv02ot>

19 UN Human Developmente Ratio [hdr2020_en.pdf](https://data.un.org/Data.aspx?ds=HDR&dsq=HDR2020_en.pdf)

For more information, see contributing factors: climate change²⁰, demographic growth and flows of migration²¹, economic development²², the erosion of public health systems²³ and poverty and social inequality^{24 25}.

In view of the historical moment we are going through, it could also be appropriate to elevate health structures to the category of critical structures, since, as has been shown, the evolution of society, meaning the ageing of society, will imply, according to these data, a change in society's priorities, in which hospitals and health centres will play an even more relevant role, and, consequently, could become a target for any terrorist group or criminal gang. Whether those are physical threats or attacks, or those carried out in the virtual sphere.

The thin red line of the State Security Forces and Agencies

In order to find a solution to maintain the necessary levels of public safety and national security, as well as to counteract the demographic decline, it would be essential for society to realize that the average age of members of the Armed Forces and Security Forces of member states is already high.

To demonstrate the scenario described above, the cases of Spain and Italy will be taken as examples, countries at the forefront of European security due to their proximity to the African continent.

20 In the following links you can see - also through specific cases - how other factors that could be considered as secondary, are - in reality - the main cause.

Climate and weather; e.g. diseases with zoonotic vectors such as West Nile Disease

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4342965/>

Chikungunya (transmitted by mosquitoes) are moving further the tropics as the climate warms

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8226708/pdf/viruses-13-01024.pdf>

21 Change in human demographics and trade: (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics>) e.g. rapid travel enabled SARS to rapidly spread around the globe. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK56579/>

22 Economic development; e.g. use of antibiotics to increase meat yield of farmed cows leads to antibiotic resistance (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6017557/pdf/molecules-23-00795.pdf>)

23 Breakdown of public health; e.g. the current situations in Zimbabwe, Syria (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zimbabwe>)

24 Poverty and social inequality; e.g. tuberculosis is primarily a problem in low-income areas. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6019811/>

25 WHO Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data Poverty and health. (DAC guidelines and reference series) Poverty 2. Health status 3. Delivery of health care - organisation and administration 4. Financing, Health 5. Public policy 6. Intersectoral cooperation 7. Guidelines. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Development Assistance Committee. ISBN 92 4 156236 6 (WHO) (NLM classification: WA 30) 92 6 410018 0 (OECD)

Statistics published by the Spanish Ministry of Defence in 2019 reported that the average age of members of the armed forces is around 43.38 years²⁶, while in Italy, according to sources from the Italian Ministry of Defence²⁷, the average age is 42 years, but the trend tells us that it is increasing rapidly.

One case, not mentioned above, but even more significant of the situation we are experiencing in Europe, and which it is considered necessary to highlight, was published in the British newspaper *"The Mirror"*.

The article tells the story of the British special forces fighter, a member of the famous elite corps, SAS (*Special Air Service*), who was reinstated to active duty in March 2021, at the age of 51²⁸.

The case has hit the world's headlines as it highlights a widespread situation: the armed forces cannot find recruits for the special forces and the average number of operators on active duty is over 40 years old.

The reinstatement of this "grandad", as he is presented in the news, is due to the need to have operatives in the special units, since the SAS unit has more retired personnel than replacements for future Green Berets.

The decline of the national population with all the implications that this will entail and the need for greater investment in defence, raises certain perplexities²⁹ about the real capacity to secure the national borders which, in turn, as has already been mentioned on several occasions, are also the last real borders of Europe.

"Moreover, this huge reduction of resources, has been translated into an extreme situation in some parts of the Spanish Armed Forces. The situation has come to such an extent that the credibility of Spain as a reliable partner and ally is at stake. All the prestige painstakingly earned by our FAS (both on the outside and on our own floor) is about to be thrown overboard"³⁰.

So far, only the challenge posed by the flows of clandestine/uncontrolled migrants has been mentioned, but it would also be appropriate to expand the range of challenges and observe the changes in the geopolitics of the Mediterranean and the African continent, paying special attention to the Sahel, as well as the evolution of

26 SPAIN-Ministry of Defence Spain. [estadistica_de_personal_militar_de_carrera_2019.pdf](#)

27 ITALY-Ministry of Defence Italy. [http://www.esercito.difesa.it/Rapporto-Esercito/Istantanea EI/Personale/Pagine/ETA.aspx](http://www.esercito.difesa.it/Rapporto-Esercito/Istantanea_EI/Personale/Pagine/ETA.aspx)

28 SOURCE: The Mirror newspaper. <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/hero-grandad-rejoins-sas-becomes-23620880>

29 Torres Sepedra, J. The Europe of Defence, 2020, ECR-Report Security And Defence 22.51.43.pdf

30 Torres Sepedra, Jorge. The Europe of Defence, 2020, ECR-Report Security And Defence 22.51.43.pdf. - Arteaga, F., Simón, L. (2020). Op. cit. Instituto El Cano. P. 20

organised crime, which even has submarines³¹ to transport drugs from South America, mafias of various types, as well as transnational criminal gangs, proxy wars, and a long list of real threats in a world that is increasingly interconnected and apparently less governable.

At this point, therefore, on the basis of the data set out above, what we in European societies should be reflecting on should be: If the national population will decrease, human capital and economic resources will be reduced, and on the other hand, the poorest countries will increase their population by +215%: How will we manage to control the flows of clandestine migrants, the evolution of transnational crime and the potential threats of asymmetric warfare that will affect our territorial integrity?

It is important to highlight the fact that illegal immigration is not the result of a desire for adventure, but the direct effect of human and food insecurity, as well as fragile states incapable of guaranteeing minimum levels of well-being, which has a direct impact on the national security of European countries.

It is from a neutral perspective in terms of political philosophy that this work is developed, and therefore does not imply an opposition to the reception of other human beings with clear and proven needs, but rather to expose the scope of an uncertain future in which the conditions for this may not exist.

It all depends on whether it will bring about a change in *forma mentis* [mindset] and *modus operandi* [manner of working], i.e. whether Europe will reconsider how it will deal with the crises created by the flows of clandestine migrants, and whether it may be appropriate to move from crisis management to migration control.

Controlled and selective immigration is undoubtedly less costly than a crisis, both in human and economic terms.

Proof that the entire European community considers the Sahel to be a matter of concern³², beyond the economic and geostrategic interests that some EU member states may have, is demonstrated by the fact that the Sahel is a region of great concern for the European Union, as shown by

the military training missions and the fight against jihadist terrorism (EUTMALI, Barkhane or Task Force Takuba), the fight against immigration carried out by FRONTEX or the security reforms that are being attempted - through the *Security Sector Reform in the Sahel* - without taking into account the border expansion towards the Sahel that Europe has carried out, giving the impression that the Sahel has become the European version of the famous Maginot

31 <https://channel16.dryadglobal.com/colombian-navy-seizes-7.4t-tonnes-of-cocaine-in-4-maritime-operations>

32 <https://www.mei.edu/publications/eus-strategic-compass-preparing-navigate-mena-less-us>

line³³, including from the point of view of the outcomes obtained, be it in Mali or in Côte d'Ivoire.

France's forced exit from Mali, as a former French colony, and the entry of other actors, such as Russia and its private paramilitary company (Wagner), should lead to a profound consideration and reinterpretation of Europe's position in the region.

Reorganising the European strategy in the Sahel should entail a change in the dialogue and *modus operandi* with central governments and local authorities, as the strategy followed so far has proven not to produce the desired outcomes.

In light of these data, the scenario that emerges shows this peculiar region at a time of great change and great challenges, as Mali's exit from Europe could be exploited by Tuareg pro-independence forces to gain even more ground and affiliates throughout the region. And we mustn't forget the role of the Tuaregs as substitutes for the state and for service providers in the regions located farthest from capital cities. Not to mention the fact that food shortages are increasing the ranks of Sahelian jihadists.

This should give further impetus and commitment to European military mission in the Sahel, Task Force Takuba.

Initially led by Sweden, it should be composed of all European member states, since European security is to some extent at stake in the Sahel.

The current situation in Africa, in the Sahel

As indicated in the previous paragraph, the demographic increase in Africa to 2.5 billion people by 2050 and 4.8 billion by 2100 is undoubtedly a source of concern for the European continent, especially if one takes into account the conditions of the African continent and the interests behind it.

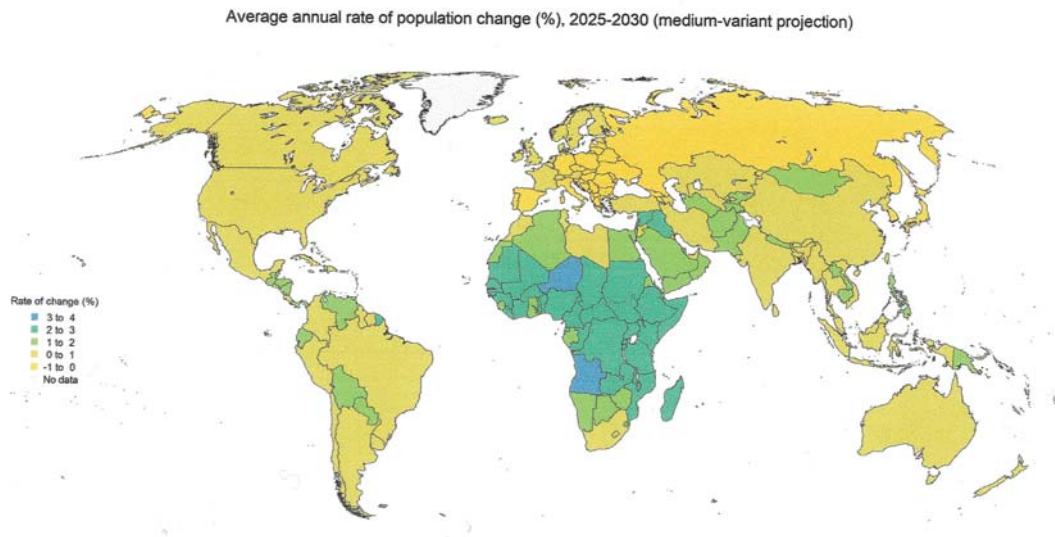
Let us not forget that the potential damage caused by the interference of powers geographically more distant from Africa will have repercussions on European shores and societies.

An important aspect that should not be overlooked is the inaccurate data provided by African states on birth rates, since, as in the case of Nigeria, there is no civil registry that can provide accurate data; in fact, Nigeria is one of the countries that will experience the greatest population increase, from the current 280 million to 733 million³⁴ million citizens.

³³ Bussoni, M. (2008). La línea Maginot. I luoghi della "muraglia invalicabile". Mattioli-1885.

³⁴ UNITED NATION DESA-Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division - "World Population Prospects 2019: Highlights" New York; United Nations (2019).

The chromatic-demographic map (map 2) below shows that Niger currently has 25 million citizens, but estimates predict that it could double or even triple its population in the coming years, in fact, it provides an even more accurate picture, as it crowns Niger³⁵ as the leader in births; this is because the Sahelian country registers annual births of more than 45,000 new inhabitants³⁶.



Map 2

Beyond Niger's record birth rate, one needs to understand Niger's role on the chessboard of European security, since in addition to being a member of the G5 and a recipient of the SSR programme, it also happens to be one of the poorest countries in the world and ranks last (189 of 189) in the human development index ranking³⁷.

Economic instability should make it easier to understand the most important aspect, for the purposes of this study, as it is currently the epicentre in the trafficking of clandestine migrants³⁸, of Tuareg independence³⁹ —of which its armed branch is

35 UNITED NATIONS DESA-Population Division. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. "World population prospects: the 2010 revision, volume 1: comprehensive tables". New York: United Nations (2011).

36 Demographic map: the map highlights trends with colours. And, in colours, expresses that Niger's population will maintain a positive growth trend.

37 <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/latest-human-development-index-ranking>

38 Siradji, S. (2015). Séminaire de formation sur le trafic illicite de migrants/EUCAP Sahel : Début d'un partenariat entre la mission Eucap Sahel Niger et l'Agence nigérienne pour la lutte contre la traite des personnes. www.lesahel.org [online]. [Cited December 2, 2015]. <http://www.lesahel.org/index.php/component/k2/item/9725-s%C3%A9minaire-de-formation-sur-le-traffic-illicite-de-migrants-eucap-sahel--d%C3%A9but-dun-partenariat-entre-la-mission-eucap-sahel-niger-et-lagence-nig%C3%A9rienne-pour-la-lutte-contre-la-traite-des-personnes>.

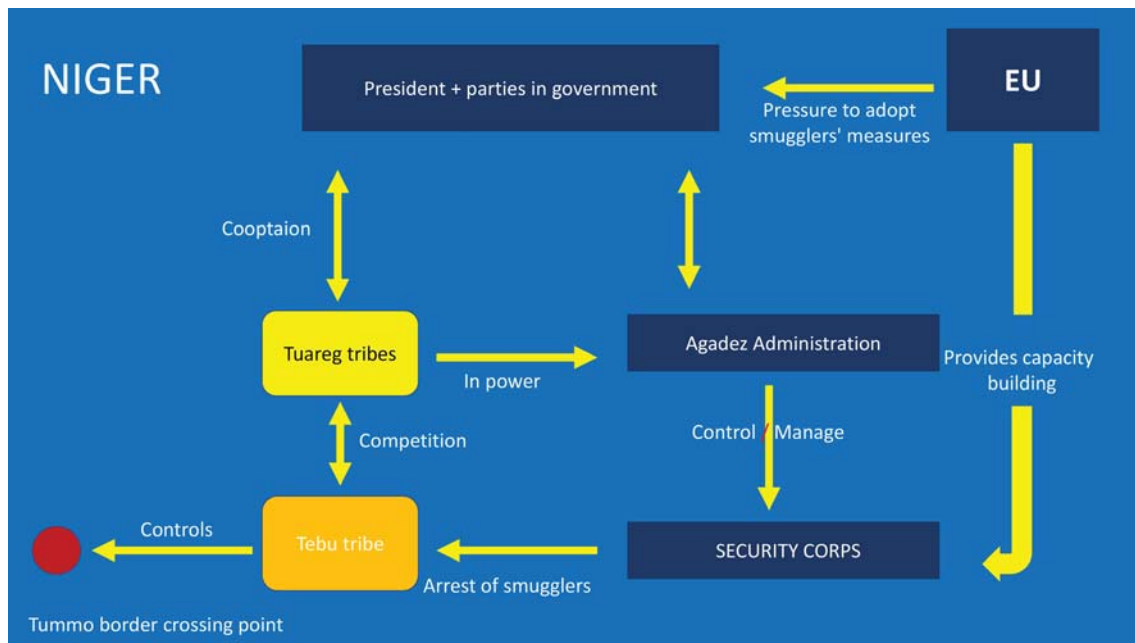
39 Strazzari, F. (2015). Azawad and the rights of passage: the role of illicit trade in the logic of armed group formation in northern Mali. NOREF-Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre. The

Sahelian jihadism— and, of course, the operational base from which 75% of criminal organisations carry out their economic transactions: tobacco, narcotics⁴⁰, the white slave trade, slavery, child trafficking, blood and organ smuggling, arms, and a long list of other illicit methods, which could be understood as an economic instrument to finance the independence of the Sahel-Al Azawad corridor.

In 2017, two years after the entry into force of law 36/2015⁴¹ in Niger, a law that punishes human trafficking, the Netherlands Institute of International Relations ‘Clingendael’,⁴² in its 2017 report entitled: “Roadmap for sustainable migration management Agadez”, condemned the collusion of central and local national authorities as well as neighbouring countries in human trafficking.

Diagram 1⁴³ below shows that the data presented so far have an approved scientific basis, but above all, in a scenario such as the one described above, it should be difficult to recognise in these countries a partner for national security and for European security.

Especially when State institutions are liable to be accused of receiving money from human smuggling⁴⁴ or other crimes.



Tuareg- Azawad Movement. https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Strazzari_NOREF_Clingendael_Mali_Azawad_Dec2014.pdf

⁴⁰ Crucially, it makes a dichotomy between drugs coming from Latin America and arriving on Western shores, and drugs manufactured in Africa, the latter being synthetic drugs. In both cases, the drugs follow several routes, with a stop in the Agadez region being obligatory for drugs destined for Europe, along the central Mediterranean route, and on to Egypt or Greece.

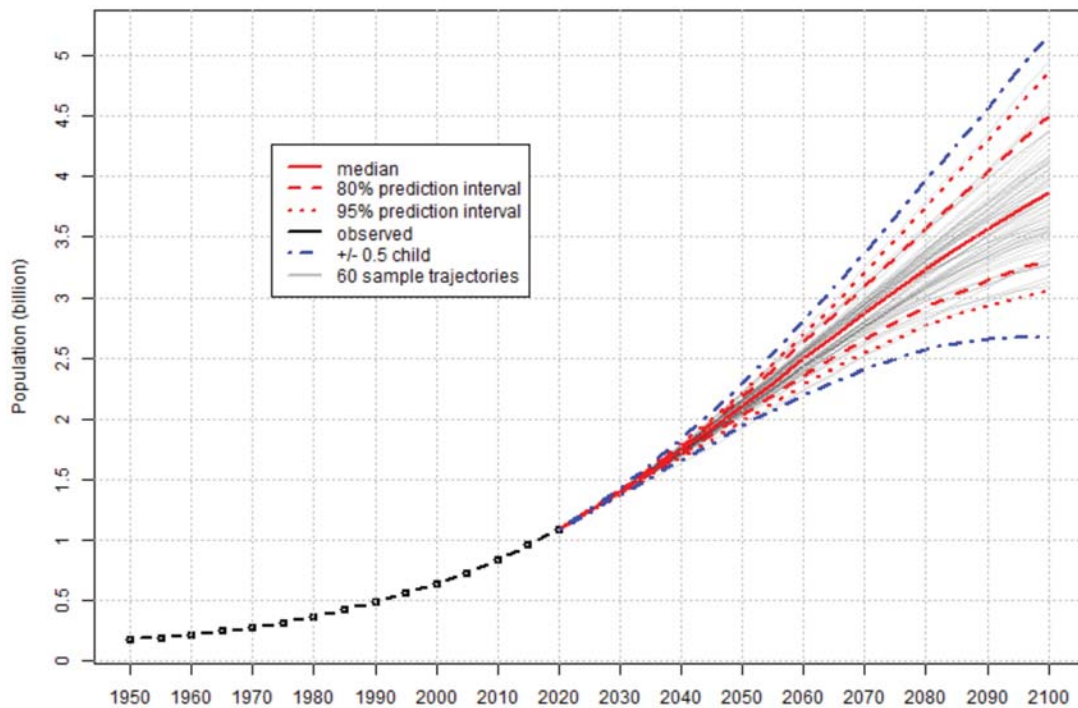
⁴¹ http://www.justice.gouv.ne/images/lois/pdfs/loi_relative_au_trafic_illicite_de_migrants.pdf

⁴² [Roadmap_for_sustainable_migration_management_Agadez.pdf](#)

⁴³ Niger scheme for illegal immigration traffic.

⁴⁴ Molenaar, F. (2017). Irregular migration and human smuggling networks in Niger, CRU report. Netherlands Institute of International Relations ‘Clingendael’. The Hague, Clingendael.

The following graph (Graph 2) shows the birth curve in the SSA (Sub-Saharan Africa) region and thus the clear demographic superiority of a developing continent⁴⁵.



Graph 2

The data cited so far only focus on the different demographic trends between Africa and Europe, but it is the analysis of this data that provides a projection of the different scenarios to be faced at the national and regional level, with the countries of the European Mediterranean basin being the first ports of reception. Since, according to the European treaties, they are responsible for the management of illegal immigration⁴⁶.

The last five years have highlighted the inability to manage crises generated by migration or armed conflict, as has been and continues to be the case with the Syrian conflict, as well as the structural, operational and political weakness of the European Community.

It is in light of these structural gaps that the demographic data introduced above are even more worrying, as the demographic forecasts for Africa and its potential flow of human beings could catapult between 40 and 60 million people to Europe's shores in search of a better quality of life. According to Ji-Yeun Rim, Coordinator of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Youth Integration Project,

⁴⁵ Figure 1. United Nations DESA- Population Division. World Population Prospect 2019. <http://population.un.org/wpp/>

⁴⁶ EUROPEAN COMMISSION. (2020). *New-pact-on-migration-and-asylum-package_1.pdf*. Brussels, September 23.

by 2030, 440⁴⁷ million sub-Saharan Africans are expected to be looking for work, of whom 240 million will remain in the region and the rest will try to seek their fortune outside the continent, i.e. some 200 million young women and men.

The figures provided so far are pre-pandemic estimates, which opens space for another scenario: Post-pandemic times and the alarming worsening of climate change in Africa, in particular in SSA⁴⁸.

The economies of African countries, characterised by low income countries (LICs)⁴⁹, have suffered further indebtedness due to the emergence of the virus, offering bleak prospects for food security and human safety that have deteriorated under the current circumstances. In security terms, this translates into increased flows of displaced persons and illegal migrants.

The scenes observed in the ports of the Canary Islands in 2020 alone have highlighted the need for new containment policies.

By containment policy, we do not mean a system such as the one implemented, not in its entirety, by former US President Donald Trump and his wall on the Tijuana border, but policies that provide more space for the study of long-range programmes for integration, since, one way or the other, it will not be possible to stop migration flows.

This should lead to further reflection, as discussed above, from a strategic and financial point of view, on whether it would be better to implement management programmes, by that, meaning having control of migration flows, rather than living in a continuous state of crisis.

Planning provides control, including at the financial level, while crisis management merely buffers a situation that will tend to recur over time.

Security sector reform in the Sub-Saharan region, better known as the SSR, corresponds more to a Western will to improve the unstable, and in some cases non-existent, security system in the region than to the will of the stakeholders, as discussed above.

It should be noted that the countries participating in this programme (Mauritania, Chad, Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger) do not have a state security system in their peripheral areas, i.e. a police force, and that, despite ongoing reform, these tasks are carried out by the armed forces or by traditional (local) armed groups.

47 https://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/africa-sub-sahariana-440-milioni-giovani-cerca-un-impiego-entro-2030--AEeSwGtE?refresh_ce=1

48 SSF/ SSA=Sub Saharan Africa/ África Sub-Saharan Africa

49 Low-Income Countries; the term “Low income countries” refers to those countries whose population has a per capita income of \$1,026 or less per year.

<https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/low-income-countries>

Given the permanence and strength of the clan/tribal system, this is an arbitrary situation in terms of the law or the application of the law⁵⁰.

SRH foresees the implementation of actions that will clash head-on with the interests of central and local governments. Recall the report published by the Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael.

We also need to understand that the origin and basis of the problems in the region lie in ancestral issues, such as disputes between herders and farmers or social exclusion on the basis of gender or religion, and are therefore difficult to solve and sometimes even difficult for the West to understand. A significant fact about the cultural complexity, and therefore the *forma mentis* we are facing, is that in the sub-Saharan region alone there are more than seven hundred forms of religion, i.e. as many religions as there are ethnic groups⁵¹.

The picture becomes even more complex if one takes into account the accelerating process of climate change, the direct effect of which is a decrease in water and fertile land, which in turn is also the cause of armed clashes.

To the elements of conflict just listed we must add the independence process in the Sahel corridor mentioned above.⁵²

Therefore, security reform in a country, as Bernando and Toure's report⁵³ states, cannot be reduced to military or technical aspects alone, but must also take into account all elements of society.

“Security is not only a military and technical issue. It has to systematically take into account all elements of society⁵⁴”

This concept, which should be possible to apply or implement in any region of the world, becomes a utopia when state fragility, group interests and culture are moving in the opposite direction, especially considering that in Africa the centre/periphery concept limits the state's capacity to control the territory.

The issue of state fragility, mentioned above, therefore takes on a dimension of priority, since the layered presence of the state, which in turn is synonymous with legal and financial strength, is the basis for problem-solving.

50 Venturi, B., Toure, N. A. (2020). *Out of the Security Deadlock: Challenges and Choices in the Sahel*. IAI- Istituto Affari Internazionali.

51 Dammann, E. (1963). *Die Religionen Afrikas*. Stuttgart. (Trad. it L'Africa. Milano, 1985).

52 Venturi, B., Toure, N. A. (2020). *Out of the Security Deadlock: Challenges and Choices in the Sahel*. IAI- Istituto Affari Internazionali.

53 Venturi, B., Toure, N. A. (2020). *Out of the Security Deadlock: Challenges and Choices in the Sahel*. IAI- Istituto Affari Internazionali.

54 Venturi, B., Toure, N. A. (2020). *Out of the Security Deadlock: Challenges and Choices in the Sahel*. IAI- Istituto Affari Internazionali.

The dilemma of fragility

In order to understand the scope of state fragility and its consequences, it is appropriate to examine the issue in greater depth through a highly topical example, since the scenario that will be discussed below is the basis of today's problems and, if correctly internalised, could be a solution for the future.

The right understanding of the fragility dilemma could be interpreted as the totality of actions which increase fragility in an already fragile situation.

The case that concerns us can be explained as the vicious circle that is generated when a situation of prolonged aid or dependency is maintained over the long term.

A possible outline of the effects of the dilemma could be described in a sequence as follows: More aid leads to more fragility, which in turn leads to more poverty and stagnation in development, and thus to an incessant need for aid from third parties, which equals chronic dependency.

A process in which national and international interests are involved, without considering the civil or clan/tribe changes which, in turn, pursue their own interests and which do not allow the state-victim and executioner of itself to give life to an independent system that generates well-being and wealth.

Through the examples presented so far, it can be seen how cooperation programmes and the presence of NGOs have unintentionally contributed to the weakening of already fragile states.

The aim is not to belittle the work carried out by states, international organisations or NGOs themselves, but to show that the historical and political context of African countries should have led to the search for alternative solutions.

In 2003, the Burkinabe historian Joseph Ki-Zerbo⁵⁵, in an interview with René Holstein, pointed out that the solution for the African continent lies in the economic liberation of Africa or Pan-Africanism.

To understand the reflections of historian Joseph Ki-Zerbo, one must internalise post-colonial African thought in order to appreciate the evolution of the regional or continental context, given that the collective African imagination has interpreted decolonisation as a strategy of the developed world to maintain control over the continent, with the Bretton Woods agreements⁵⁶, the creation of the FCFA currency⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Holenstein, R. (2003). *À quand l'Afrique? Entretien avec René Holenstein*: Éditions de l'Aube. La Tour d'Aigues. P. 33.

⁵⁶ Cochi, M. (2020). *Sahel e Africa Sub-Sahariana*. Osservatori Strategico, Anno XXII n.º IV.

⁵⁷ www.bceao.int/fr/content/histoire-du-franc-cfa

(Franc of the French Colonies in Africa) or the International Monetary Fund being the instruments used to perpetuate control.

Over the years Africa has tried to adjust to the standards of Western countries, but this has not come about through a process of internal evolution and maturation, but through a forced and premature implementation phase, as the continent did not have the necessary instruments to assimilate the political culture imposed on it by the countries colonising it, who in turn imposed coexistence with rival neighbours, all due to agreements between Europeans where Africans have had no say in the matter.

Quoting the Moroccan historian Abdallah- Laroui (Al'Arawi)⁵⁸:

“We were weak, disunited and delayed (technologically unevolved) and therefore Africa could be colonised.

Considering the points presented above, the dilemma of fragility could therefore also be interpreted as an instrument for the perpetuation of a *status quo* of instability and fragility; a system that facilitates the *governance* of a supposedly independent continent, since the instability and fragility at the bottom of the pyramid allows third parties to decide on the future of a continent whose value in raw materials is fundamental for developed economies.

The African continent as a whole represents 2-3% of the world's GDP in global terms, less than France's GDP, but in terms of raw materials it accounts for 30% of the planet's material resources: 15% of oil reserves, 40% of gold reserves and 80% of platinum, 17% of uranium, 11% of copper, 30% of iron ore, 7% of bauxite, 63% of cobalt, of which 58% comes from the Republic of Congo⁵⁹, 46% of manganese and it is undoubtedly the richest continent in diamonds.

For the purpose of this paper and as a practical and theoretical demonstration of the concept that has been presented so far, an example of a manual can be taken: “China's interference in Djibouti”.

Let's recall the rules necessary for the dilemma to be recognised as having been fulfilled: the totality of actions which increase fragility in an already fragile situation.

In this case, actions can cover a wide spectrum, ranging from cooperation and development aid to financial concessions such as subsidies or loans.

In the case that will be discussed below, it can be observed how a situation of fragility can be transformed, consciously or unconsciously, into greater State fragility and even a risk to the integrity of the State.

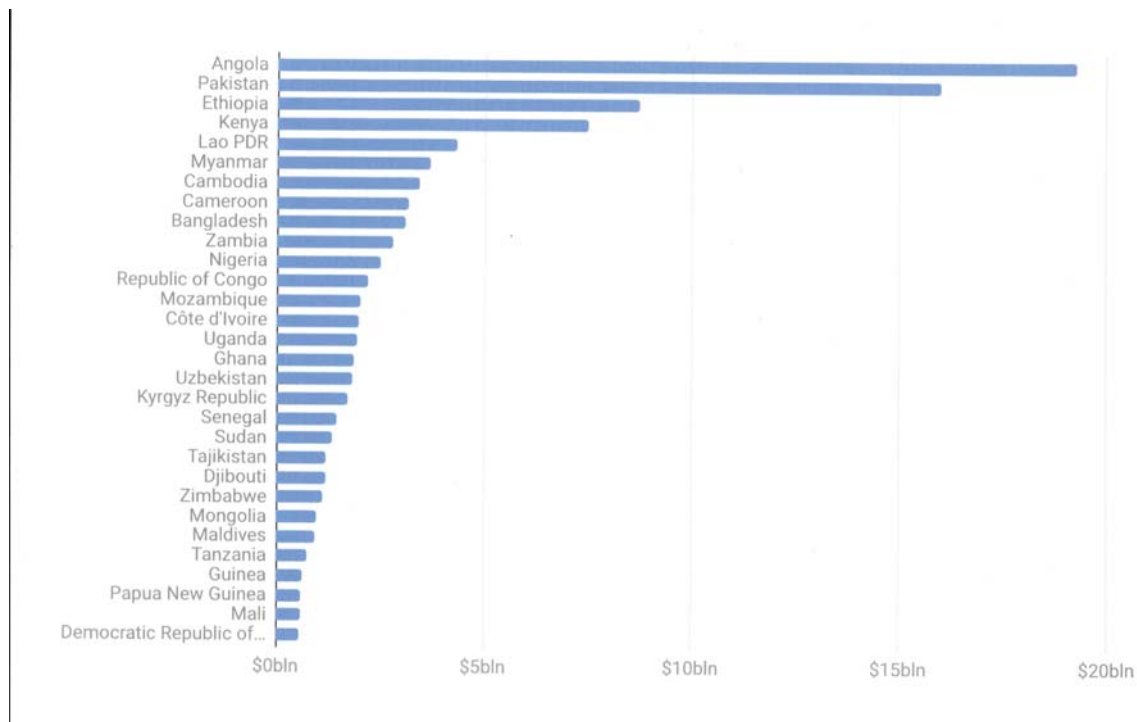
⁵⁸ Campanini, M. (2005). *Il pensiero Arabo contemporaneo*. IL Mulino. P. 126.

⁵⁹ <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/79b2db81b98a42e69ef2a9390b2aab42>

China's foreign policy in Africa over the last thirty years has been characterised by a large dose of aggressiveness that has led to the Asian tiger becoming one of the biggest financiers and investors on the African continent.

For an overview of the magnitude of the phenomenon see graph 3⁶⁰.

Over the last decade, China has invested more than \$15 billion in Djibouti for the development of the strategic port of Doraleh, as well as in the infrastructure necessary for its proper functioning.



Graph 3

Which part of the scenario described above potentially makes Djibouti an even more fragile country?

The first point to consider relates to its foreign debt; 82% of Djibouti's foreign debt has been acquired by China. This fact undoubtedly facilitates a better understanding of the scenario that will be presented below.

Among the agreements between the People's Republic of China and the African continent, it has been revealed that the subsidies or loans that are granted conceal clauses that could well be qualified as illegal lending or abuse, especially if one takes into account that, in the case of economic subsidies, as a rule, there is no linkage or obligation to repay.

It is between these clauses that the "dilemma of fragility" component is hidden.

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⁶⁰ Graph 2. Source John Hopkins University -China Africa research initiative.

In the present case, if Djibouti were to default on its debts, the port of Doraleh would become the property of Beijing.

In Japan in August 2019, during the African Development Conference, the president of the Djibouti Ports and Free Zones Authority, Mr Aboubaker O. Hadi, expressed his concern and unease with the following words:

“We have had no choice, has the rest of the world offered us an alternative?”

The Chinese “debt trap”⁶¹, as it has been dubbed, turns African countries into slaves at home, expropriating them of the few strategic and value-added assets (*assets*) they have, leaving them in an even more fragile situation, and it can be deduced from this scenario that African states will have fewer options to lay the foundations for a way out of the current situation.

We also need to recognise that the geostrategic value of the port of Doraleh for China is well worth a diplomatic conflict at the international level.

The case of Djibouti is not an isolated case in Africa, see the case of the Ugandan airports⁶², or the case of loans in Kenya or Sri Lanka⁶³, nor is it an isolated case in Europe, see the ports of Bari, Taranto, Naples or Trieste.

However, it is Beijing’s praxis in a continent where state fragility, caused by a lack of economic development, social cohesion and corruption, allows for the interference of new colonising powers and the implementation of their aggressive foreign policies.

The case of Djibouti should awaken the reader’s interest in this type of policy, since it concerns not only the connector between cause and effect, but also a direct impact on European society, since greater poverty equals higher rates of illegal migration flows.

Conclusions and proposals

The scenarios presented so far reveal that Europe:

1. needs to increase its population in order to maintain social systems and production levels;
2. needs to change its immigration policy;
3. needs to change its approach to defence and national security systems;
4. must reflect on its own and other people’s actions outside, and the relationship with the cause-effect connector.

61 China-Africa Research Initiative John Hopkins University. www.the-estafrican.co.ke

62 <https://allafrica.com/stories/202111260118.html>

63 <https://formiche.net/2022/01/cina-kenya-debito-africa-sri-lanka-india/>

In Spain's case, the reasons for current pension policies, such as the delay in retirement and incentives presented to date, such as compensation or the check for delaying retirement, are insufficient and even, considering the current economic situation after the second year of COVID-19, could lead to possible insolvency on the part of the State; let us remember the case of the Roman Empire.

Focusing on the Spanish case in defence and security matters, and with a view to the 2030-2040 horizon, only through a change in the current structure could the current security levels be maintained.

To this end, consideration should be given to the establishment of a hybrid military service that matches the Israeli military system⁶⁴ and the Swiss military system⁶⁵, since in both cases all citizens are actively involved in defence and national security on a permanent basis.

Giving preference to the Israeli model, since it is the only one of the two systems in which both sexes actively participate in state security.

This hybrid model should comprise a period of 2-3 years of active service for the entire population - women and men - from the age of 18, followed, as in the Swiss case, by an annual return to service of 1-2 weeks until the age of 55-65.

Taking the Swiss model as a reference point, regulation weapons and ammunition, excluding explosive weapons, could be kept in citizens' homes, as indicated in Article 5 of the By-law on military equipment⁶⁶.

We consider it indisputable that the active participation of citizens in the country's security, especially at the training stage, would lead to a reduction of the current internal divisions, both at the national and European level.

We understand that being an active part of an organisation and being aware of being needed by the community raises individual awareness and increases interest in the good of the community.

It therefore pushes away philosophies and actions that weaken the state and increases solidarity and a sense of rootedness.

Such a socio-military reform, which would require an increase in the defence budget, more than the 2% currently requested by NATO⁶⁷, would increase job creation in the defence and security sectors; including in the security sector, private security companies.

64 Israel-Ministry of Defence Israel. <https://www.idf.il/en>

65 Swiss Confederation-Ministry of Defence Swiss Confederation. <https://www.vtg.admin.ch/it/mio-servizio-militare/informazioni-general/obbligo-di-prestare-servizio-militare.html>

66 <https://www.fedlex.admin.ch/eli/cc/2018/732/it>

67 <https://www.politicaexterior.com/defensa-europea-llego-la-hora-de-las-decisiones-dificiles/>

Investment in the defence and security industry, beyond the economic benefits, would enhance national prestige internationally and attract new investors interested in the development of the defence and security industry.

It is therefore understood that the greater the evolution and experience in an industrial field, the greater the interest from outside the borders in participating in the process.

An example of the scenario just described can be found in Israel, whose military industry⁶⁸ and whose military operators are world-renowned.

As an example in the field of public safety, one could consider the reform carried out in the United States, Canada or the United Kingdom, whose origins date back to the 1970s⁶⁹, in which private police companies, in special cases or in towns and cities with budget problems, perform functions of low priority or importance (Low-priority)⁷⁰ of State security forces; acting, therefore, as law enforcement agents, even with all due distinctions⁷¹.

In relation to Security Forces and Agencies, focused on avoiding enormous amounts of funds being wasted, it would be appropriate to consider creating a single police force, although due to the lack of human capital, it might be more appropriate to consider the formation of a multifunctional police-military corps.

Obviously, as discussed above, new technologies will facilitate some services that could be performed by more senior officers, including the acquisition of *unmanned* systems⁷², but even in this case, operators are required.

As mentioned above, an increase in defence and security budgets, as well as high levels of personnel training is essential.

The intelligence services (CNI) require a separate chapter, as their role is fundamental to national security, especially in terms of external action, and even more so given that the information gathered in the field and its subsequent analysis are the

68 Israel Military Industries ltd.national armaments and defence systems company. <http://www.imisystems.com>

69 Kakalik, S. J., Wildhorn, S. (1971). Private Police in the United States: Findings and Recommendations. Vol.I, December 1971. R-869/DOJ. <https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/reports/2006/R869.pdf>

70 Kakalik, S. J., Wildhorn, S. (1971). Private Police in the United States: Findings and Recommendations. Vol.I, December 1971. R-869/DOJ. <https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/reports/2006/R869.pdf>

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71 Sparrow, M. K., Ph. D. (2014). Managing the Boundary Between Public and Private Policing. New Perspectives in Policing Bulletin. Washington D.C., U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice. NCJ 247182.

72 Unmanned systems.

basis of prevention by national security in the face of external threats and, of course, internal sleeper cells.

The proposals theorised and presented here are not intended to encourage a move away from a democratic state towards a militarised state, but rather to invite reflection on the need to bring about a change in *forma mentis* toward a national awareness that will help to internalise the concept that national security is everyone's business.

Or as the Roman writer Flavius Vegetius Renatus put it:

“Si Vis Pacem Para Bellum”.

(If you want peace, prepare for war)

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Source Map 1: FRONTEX.

Demographic map: the map highlights trends through colours. And expresses, through colours, that Niger’s population will maintain a positive growth trend.

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