

# Peaceful Surrender



Peaceful Surrender:  
The Depopulation of Rural Spain  
in the Twentieth Century

By

Fernando Collantes and Vicente Pinilla

**CAMBRIDGE  
SCHOLARS**

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P U B L I S H I N G

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This book first published 2011

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data  
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

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ISBN (10): 1-4438-2838-6, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-2838-3

To Elena, Maribel, Clara and Anchel



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## INTRODUCTION

In 1981, economic historian Sidney Pollard published a book that would become a classic: *Peaceful Conquest: the Industrialization of Europe, 1760-1970*. Throughout that book, Pollard used a regional approach in order to describe the gradual spread of industrialisation across Europe. Although it was a long process that continued well after the Second World War, industrialisation achieved, according to Pollard, what neither Napoleon nor Hitler did – the conquest of Europe. This book is about a process that is closely linked to that peaceful conquest: rural depopulation. Industrialisation was a characteristically urban phenomenon that stimulated rural-urban migrations. Not that rural-urban migration was something new: it had actually been a persistent reality in the economic and social life of pre-industrial Europe. The rural communities of pre-industrial Europe used to absorb no more than two thirds of their natural population growth, the rest of it being channelled to the cities (de Vries 1984: tables 10.1 and 10.3). What changed with industrialisation was the magnitude of the process and its implications. Maybe it was not a sudden change – as we will see in this book, it was not uncommon for the first stages of industrialisation to witness a slight increase in rural population numbers. However, in the mid- and long-term, the pull effect of the urban lifestyle was often capable of absorbing whatever natural growth took place in rural communities – and even more. While during the pre-industrial period rural-urban migration had contributed to the economic and social reproduction of rural communities, it now challenged the continuity of the rural lifestyle.

Spain, the focus of this book, is a good illustration. Spain's industrialisation started in the mid-nineteenth century (that is, it lagged in relation to northwestern Europe). In addition, industrialisation advanced slowly until well into the twentieth century. As a result, by 1950 the Spanish economy was still largely dependent on agriculture and about one half of the country's 27 million inhabitants lived in rural areas. During the following four decades, however, Spain's fast transition towards economic and social modernity witnessed one of the most extreme processes of rural depopulation in Europe. In the space of a generation, Spain's rural population fell by more than 25 per cent. Because initial population densities in many rural communities were already low, large parts of the

country became demographic deserts. Twentieth-century Spain is thus one of the most representative cases in the history of rural depopulation in industrialising Europe.

This research fills a relatively blank space in European historiography. The publication of John Saville's (1957) *Rural Depopulation in England and Wales 1851-1951* could have been the starting point of a historical study of rural population dynamics in modern Europe. But, more than half a century later, it is clear that it was not. True, European rural history has since greatly expanded through the consolidation of already existing associations (such as the British Agricultural History Society), the constitution of new associations (the French *Histoire des Sociétés Rurales* or the Spanish *Sociedad Española de Historia Agraria*) and the establishing of stable networks of international cooperation (the CORN project on the rural history of the North Sea area, or the COST action "Programme for the Study of European Rural Societies", which organized 16 international meetings between 2005 and 2009). But this expansion has not meant much for the study of rural population dynamics in modern Europe.

Why not? First, because the expansion has focused on agriculture more than on the broader rural community. Agricultural technological change, farm organisation, social relations between agrarian classes, State intervention in agriculture – these topics have attracted a well-deserved interest by European rural historians. However, the rural community is more than its agricultural sector. In the provocative terms of Bellamy *et al.* (1990) in the inaugural issue of the journal *Rural History*, rural history goes beyond "cows and ploughs". There is more in the rural economy than just agriculture. We still do not know much about the rural non-farm sectors and the population whose livelihood depended on them. This is especially clear for continental Europe, but even in Britain (without a doubt, the country where historians have written most about the issue) there are voices protesting against the tendency to equate the rural community to agriculture and thus neglect the study of the rural non-farm sectors (Burchardt 2007; Collins 2006). Furthermore, it is not just a matter of economy – outside the production sphere, many topics in rural history exceed agriculture. One of them is demography, which, as has been pointed out by Collins (2006: 83) for Britain, has been traditionally neglected by modern historians and remains the preserve of geographers. Other examples could be the patterns of consumption of rural populations, the social relations other than production relations (family, kinship), the representations and images of the countryside created by rural and urban populations, among others. Although understanding agriculture and farmers



is required for understanding any of these other topics, none of them can be approached as a purely agricultural matter (Effland 2000).

The second reason why we have not learned much about rural population dynamics during industrialisation is because the recent expansion of European rural history has left the twentieth century, and especially the period after the Second World War, relatively untouched. This is in part natural. A substantial part of the rural history debates stem from more general debates on the history of those periods during which most of the population lived in rural areas. Rural history is thus crucial for the construction of the history of medieval and early modern Europe. In fact, these periods form the backbone of rural history in countries such as Germany (Blickle 2006). Another source of interest in rural history stems from the debate on the forces driving economic development in modern Europe. Because by the start of development agriculture's share in Gross Domestic Product is usually very high, the evolution of agriculture seems very relevant for the synergies and linkages that lead to development (Kay 2009). Economic historians investigate then the role of agriculture in Europe's historical experience of development (Lains and Pinilla eds. 2009). In Britain, for instance, the history of agrarian change in the critical period 1750-1850 has traditionally been the central node of research (Burchardt 2007).

Neither of these two invitations to rural history (the look at an essentially rural pre-industrial world and the research on the beginnings of modern economic development) can, however, do much to mobilise historical work on the twentieth century and, especially, the period after 1945. Beyond a given threshold, the industrialisation and urbanisation of Europe led to a decrease in the economic and social weight of the countryside. This naturally led to a decrease in the role of rural history in the construction of modern European history. It also made economic development much less dependent on agriculture and agricultural change. In spite of the recent launch of valuable monographs considering twentieth-century rural history in countries such as England (Howkins 2003) and France (Jessenne 2006), virtually every historiographical survey (Britain, France, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium) argues that a deeper study of the twentieth century (and especially the period after 1945) is one of the great challenges that European rural history faces today (Collins 2006: 78; Burchardt 2007: 472; Vivier 2005: 3; Finlay 2001: 307; Bieleman 2006: 245; Vanhaute and van Molle 2006: 230).

Nor have population historians and historical demographers filled this relatively blank space. In an authoritative survey, David-Sven Reher (2000: 68) talks about an "atavistic fear" of the twentieth century and especially

the period after the Second World War. It has to be admitted that the *Histoire des populations de l'Europe* edited by Jean-Pierre Bardet and Jacques Dupâquier in 1999 devotes one of its three volumes to the twentieth century – a proportion that is higher than usual for rural history standards (as in the *Agrarian History of England and Wales*, the *Histoire de la France rurale*, or the *Historia agraria de la España contemporánea*). Still, rural population dynamics get very little attention in the national case studies that make up the book.

These trends are well illustrated by Spanish historiography. Spanish rural history has greatly expanded since the 1980s. The publication of the three-volume *Historia agraria de la España contemporánea* in 1985/86 (García Sanz and Garrabou eds. 1985; Garrabou and Sanz eds. 1985; Garrabou *et al.* eds. 1986) was a watershed. Contrary to the 1975/77 *Histoire de la France rurale* (Duby and Wallon eds. 1975-76), which today is perceived by commentators as the final synthesis of the research programme started after the Second World War (Jones 2003), the *Historia agraria de la España contemporánea* was the starting point of an intense research activity, the results of which were discussed in the conferences organised by the newly formed Seminario de Historia Agraria (today, Sociedad Española de Historia Agraria) and published in the new journal *Noticiario de Historia Agraria* (today, *Historia Agraria*). In Spain as elsewhere in Europe, rural historians have focused primarily on agriculture. Clearly, the central node of Spain's rural history is the discussion on the role of agriculture in the relative backwardness of the Spanish economy during the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century (Pujol *et al.* 2001). Also, as elsewhere in Europe, the second half of the twentieth century, during which the rural share in Spain's economy and population definitively fell, has been comparatively under-researched. Something similar has happened in the meantime in the field of population history (Pérez Moreda and Reher eds. 1988; Erdozain 2000). In an important article, population historians Pilar Erdozain and Fernando Mikelarena (1996) reconstruct the evolution of Spain's rural population in the nineteenth century, concluding that there was growth in rural population but growth tended to slow down during the second half of the century as a consequence of an intensification of rural-urban migrations. However, we lack a similar study for the twentieth century. Sociologist Luis Camarero (1993) has probably been the researcher that has come closest to this, but his monograph is more on the start of a new cycle of rural population growth in the late twentieth century than on the (more historical) question of depopulation.

The main historical work that deals with rural exodus is the monograph by James Simpson (1995) on Spanish agriculture between 1765 and 1965. According to Simpson, the low release of agricultural labour to the cities was one of the factors that contributed to Spanish agriculture not growing faster before the mid-twentieth century. The release of agricultural labour would have gained momentum during the early decades of the twentieth century, but stopped as a consequence of the 1936-39 civil war and the long post-war period of the 1940s. If, by the middle of the twentieth century, there was still so much agricultural labour in the Spanish countryside, it was due to the conjunction of two factors: first, the pull effect exerted by Spanish cities was only moderate; and, second, most rural population had access to land (through property or through renting) or expected to have access to land by climbing an “agrarian ladder” (from landless labourer to small cultivator). The great rural exodus of the decades after 1950 would then be explained as a consequence of changes in both of these factors. The pull effect became stronger, not only because of Spanish cities but also because of northern European countries. In addition, the policy orientation of the Franco regime, favouring landowners and direct cultivation, lessened the expectations that rural populations had on climbing an agrarian ladder. Finally, the strong decrease in real wages during the 1940s post-war period would have made rural populations more sensitive to alternatives out of the countryside (Simpson 1995: 195-202, 249-51, 272-5).

A major problem of Simpson’s interpretation is, however, that he is using the term “rural exodus” incorrectly. Simpson is not really interested in the decrease in rural populations. In fact, he does not present population data based on any kind of definition of rural (be it geographical, demographic or social). What Simpson is interested in, and this is what his data and argumentations focus on, is the decrease in agricultural populations. This is normal, since Simpson’s book is about agriculture, and not about the rural community. A similar problem pervades the interpretation by economist José Manuel Naredo (1971: 93-101; Leal *et al.* 1975: 177-224), who has been widely influential among historians.

Our research over the last years, starting with the multi-disciplinary book *Pueblos abandonados: ¿un mundo perdido?* (Acín and Pinilla eds. 1995), has tried to fill that gap – to study rural demographic change on its own. After having studied in depth some of the most representative cases of rural depopulation, such as the region of Aragón and the main mountain areas in the country, in this book we offer a general interpretation for rural Spain as a whole.

Our interest for the topic is not motivated by an anti-modern stance. All across Europe, the menace that industrialisation entailed for the lifestyle prevailing in the countryside inspired anti-modern discourses. Unsatisfied with the social transformations brought about by industrialisation and urbanisation, these discourses emphasised the cultural and moral virtues of traditional rural communities and traditional rural populations (Lynch 2010). They did so by distorting the past of rural communities and manufacturing romantic and idealised images of the countryside that had more to do with the problems of the emerging industrial societies than with the reality of the countryside past or present. Our approach to rural depopulation is not based on the idea of “paradise lost”, to use the title of the important book by historian Jeremy Burchardt (2002) on the representations of the countryside in modern Britain. The depopulation of rural Spain belonged to a broader process of economic development that critically raised the living standards of the populations involved. This was true not only for urban populations or rural populations moving to the cities (where, in general, they were successful at integrating themselves in a new environment and fulfilling their social aspirations). It was also true, as this book shows, for those rural populations who remained in the countryside. This development path taken by Spain (by Europe, more generally) was in sharp contrast to the path taken then (especially after the Second World War) by so many developing countries – a path in which high rates of rural-urban migration contributed to the creation of large pockets of urban marginality and in which rural poverty still remained widespread. Rural depopulation did not generate such problems in Spain and Europe, where it was rather a process peacefully linked to the broader process of economic and social development. That is why this book, by investigating how rural communities surrendered as they became unable to meet the challenge of the bright lights of the city, tells in the end the story of a peaceful surrender.

This does not imply, however, a Panglossian mood. In spite of their historical success in comparative perspective, contemporary developed societies have their problems too. Among them, the environmental and psychological costs of urban life feature prominently in virtually every account. The contribution of economic growth to well-being becomes subject to decreasing returns as we move ahead to advanced stages of development, which leads to question the simple (modern) premise that equated economic growth to social progress (Offer 2006). If development is basically about expanding personal capabilities (Sen 1999), then developed societies face the challenge of expanding the range of available lifestyles in a way that is not harmful for material prosperity (Giddens

2000; Hamilton 2002). This is a context in which it is interesting to study the history of rural depopulation and rural development. Beyond rural idyll, data show, at least for present day Spain, that rural populations have to face lower levels of noise, pollution and crime than their urban counterparts, while they have more frequent personal contacts with their relatives, friends and neighbours (García Sanz 1997: 399; Sancho 2004: 443). Some research has even found that a significant share of the urban population would rather live in the countryside if that did not mean a decrease in their material standard of living (Camarero 1996: 131-3). What are the circumstances that foster or hinder the economic and social development of rural communities? Why did rural Spain undergo such an intense process of depopulation during the twentieth century? That is the orientation of our historical enquiry.

The book is structured in a simple way. The first part (chapters 1, 2 and 3) describes the basic facts of rural depopulation in Europe and Spain, as well as some theoretical basis for further analysis. The second part (chapters 4 to 7) analyses the causes of rural depopulation in twentieth-century Spain, while the third part (chapters 8 and 9) revises its consequences and the way in which rural depopulation came to an end. The conclusions in part IV (chapter 10) place Spanish rural change in a broader European history.

Over the last fifteen years, our research on rural depopulation has been financed by both the Spanish government and the regional government of Aragón. This book in particular has benefited from funding from the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation (project ECO 2009-07796) and the Department of Science, Technology and Universities of the Government of Aragón (“Agri-food Economic History” excellence research group). We are also indebted to many participants at seminars and conferences, both in Spain and abroad. Most of them were university colleagues who were kind enough to take interest in our work. Among these we would like to give special thanks to Rafael Dobado, Rafael Domínguez, Juan Manuel García Bartolomé, Jon Mathieu, Alan L. Olmstead, Vicente Pérez Moreda, Luis Antonio Sáez, Lennart Schön and Carles Sudrià, as well as to our Zaragoza colleagues. For this book in particular, thanks to Cristina Bradatan, Ernesto Clar, Domingo Gallego, Josefina Lerma, Javier Silvestre, Mikolaj Stanek and participants at the 2010 Spanish-Portuguese Historical Demography Congress for their comments and help. Over the years we have often lectured in villages, where we have received helpful feedback from the local populations. Thanks also to Martin Douch, who revised our English.



**PART I:**

**TRACKING RURAL DEPOPULATION**





# CHAPTER ONE

## TRACKING RURAL DEPOPULATION IN EUROPE

As recently as the late twentieth century, OECD (1993: 20) had to admit that most of its governments operated with scarce quantitative information about economic and social trends in rural areas. If this was problematic for governments in an era of abundant statistical sources, it is easy to imagine how problematic it is for historians. Even the change in population numbers, arguably the most simple and readily available indicator, is problematic. The coexistence of several different definitions of rural and the difficulties involved in keeping any of them constant through time are major obstacles. Only by overcoming them is it possible to track the cycles of growth and decline in rural populations.

This chapter combines and homogenises information from different sources in order to describe the basic facts of rural depopulation in modern Europe. We reconstruct rural population trends in Europe between 1700 and 2000 and we put these trends in a world context. We also investigate different paths of rural change in Europe's macro-regions and some of its main countries. Before that, however, some technical notes on the measuring of rural population change are needed.

### **On measuring rural population change**

The first problem that arises when trying to measure rural population change is what we mean by rural. As sociologists Falk and Lyson (2007) have surveyed, "rural" has been thought to have three meanings. First, a demographic meaning: rural areas would be those with small population centres and low population densities. Second, an occupational meaning: rural economies would be those specialising in agriculture. And, third, a cultural meaning: rural communities would be those holding on to traditional values and presenting a high degree of cultural homogeneity. Any of these three definitions is relative and defines the countryside in opposition to the cities, where we would find large population centres, high population densities, industry- and service-based economies, and a higher degree of cultural heterogeneity. In the last few years, the influential cultural turn in geography has created a fourth meaning for

rural: rural would be not so much an objective (and measurable) trait of territories or communities, but a social construction (Cloke 2006). Rural areas and communities would simply be those which are represented as rural by society and its different groups.

Throughout this book we take the first of these meanings (the demographic meaning) and complement it with the fourth one (the representational meaning). The second meaning (economic meaning) is problematic because it critically downplays the importance of the rural non-farm sector. The third meaning (cultural meaning) is based on sociological antitheses of the “community v. society” (Tonnies [1912] 2001) kind that have proved weak from a historical point of view. In a way, what the economic and the cultural meaning do is to set an image of rural that excludes a number of possible paths of historical change. The possibility that the rural economy shifts to non-farm activities would be excluded by definition. So would be the possibility that rural culture becomes more heterogeneous or “modern”. In fact, because these changes have become more and more visible from the late twentieth century onwards, there would then be only one other way out: to do away with rural as a category of analysis. This solution is, however, unsatisfactory because it is in contrast with the persistence of rural in the language and mental representations of the present (Cloke 2006). Finally, the fourth meaning of rural (the post-modern vision of rural as a social construction) seems to us of little use for our objectives. There is no doubt that rural is a social construction, which is why the proponents and users of the other three meanings never reached an agreement on a universal definition of what rural areas or communities were. Nor is there any doubt that the topic of the representations of rural has been under-researched by historians (Burchardt 2007), which makes it a promising field for the future. However, we do not believe that this important insight is enough for researchers to abandon the search for objective, measurable indicators of rurality which, in turn, allow them to detect the historical trends of those areas and communities signalled by the indicators. Rather, we take this insight as an invitation to adopt indicators of rurality that are consistent with the social representations of “rural” prevailing in each historical and geographical context.

In the case of Spain, we have adopted the criterion that rural populations are those living in municipalities with fewer than 10,000 inhabitants. Of course, this is a far from perfect solution. In Spain there are significant regional contrasts in settlement structures, which means that this threshold might mean different things in different regions. In the south of the country, in particular, there are many municipalities with more than

10,000 inhabitants that are sometimes considered rural. As an example, the recent (2007) Law for the Sustainable Development of Rural Areas has set a 20,000-inhabitant threshold in order not to exclude these municipalities from the benefits of the law. However, the 10,000-inhabitant threshold seems safer when trying to get a perspective of rural Spain as a whole. This threshold is consistent with the social representations of rural in most of the country and, where any doubts might arise, it leads to a strict definition of rural that assures the exclusion of urban or semi-urban dynamics. As a matter of fact, this threshold, in spite of not being considered by the population historians of previous periods (Gómez Mendoza and Luna 1986; Reher 1986 and 1994; Erdozain and Mikelarena 1996; Pérez Moreda and Reher 2003), is the one used in the main social science studies of Spain's rural population in the twentieth century (Camarero 1993; García Sanz 1997).

As against our use of primary sources for Spain, our reconstruction of European data is based on two kinds of secondary sources. For the period after the Second World War, there are the statistical compilations by United Nations, the Faostat database in particular. Instead of applying a universal definition of rurality, United Nations just takes the definition of rural prevailing in each country. Therefore, these definitions are both operational in quantitative terms and consistent with the social constructions of rurality in each country. This fits well with the choices we have made above. In contrast, our reconstruction of the figures prior to 1950 is based on an exclusively demographic definition of rural. We have taken Paul Bairoch's (1988; 1997) estimates of the evolution of urban populations in Europe and the world. We have calculated rural population as the difference between total population and urban population. Because of the way in which Bairoch defines urban, this means we are taking as rural those places with a population of less than 5,000 inhabitants. It would have been better to have data on what was considered rural in each country, though Bairoch's threshold probably captures quite well the basic dimensions of rural everywhere before the Second World War. In fact, in those points in time when we can compare the estimates derived from Bairoch and United Nations data, differences are small: less than 5 per cent in both 1950 and 1980. Therefore, it seems safe to work (albeit cautiously) with the estimates derived from Bairoch for the period prior to the Second World War.

The real problem is not the estimation of Europe's rural population at a given moment, but the estimation of its change through time. The definitions of rural derived from Bairoch and Faostat, as well as our definition for the case of Spain, give a snapshot of the population living in

rural communities at a given moment. They are then particularly appropriate for calculating the share of rural populations in total national populations at that moment. However, when the aim is measuring rural population change through time, there arises the problem that some communities that were initially rural may have become urban (or vice versa) during the period under study. The larger the number of such transitions, the more imprecise our estimates of rural population change will be. The most relevant case for our purposes is that in which rural communities become urban. When this happens, a fall in rural population numbers may not reflect rural depopulation, but simply the urbanisation of previously rural communities. Let us take as an illustration a Spanish municipality of, say, 8,000 inhabitants at the beginning of the period. If this municipality grows and reaches 11,000 inhabitants by the end of the period, it becomes an urban municipality according to our definition. Therefore, its population would enter our calculations for the beginning of the period, but not for the end of it. What is the result? The same as if, due to an extreme process of rural depopulation, the municipality had lost each and every one of its 8,000 initial inhabitants.

In the particular case of Spain, this effect is not a minor issue. In 1900, there were in Spain 7,888 municipalities with a population under 10,000 inhabitants; in 2001, the figure had fallen to 7,458 municipalities (Goerlich and Mas eds. 2006: 379, 439). Each of these more than 400 transitions to urban implies the disappearance of several thousand inhabitants that were initially classified as rural. Therefore, it seems necessary to measure rural population change on the basis of a spatially constant definition of rural areas. In the case of Spain, we will consider only those municipalities that remained under the 10,000-inhabitant threshold throughout the whole of the twentieth century. Unfortunately, we cannot do anything like that for the other European countries because we are not working with their primary sources. We can, however, keep in mind the kind of bias that this will imply. Because it seems likely that the episodes of urbanisation of the countryside have been more common than the episodes of ruralisation of urban, these uncorrected estimates of rural population change will probably exaggerate the magnitude and time span of rural depopulation. This is important in order to interpret correctly the data we present in the next section.

One last note on the rural-urban dichotomy that structures our work. As has been pointed out by many researchers in social science (Sorokin and Zimmermann 1929) and history (Wrigley 1991), much of the rural-urban dichotomy actually simplifies a more complex reality: that of a continuum along which rural/urban traits are more/less present. In fact,

many European countries (Spain among them) frequently use gradations of rurality that go from “deep” rural to a “semi-urban” rural situated halfway between each of the two extremes of the continuum. As we will show throughout the book, our interpretation of rural depopulation is not alien to this. We will however avoid further decompositions of rural in our quantitative results. We do so in order to search for a clearer and more compact argumentation and, also, in order to get more precise estimates of rural change. The existence of several different categories within the continuum would generate more and more problems of transition between categories. In the particular case of Spain, a simpler way of capturing the basic insight of the continuum is available. Without abandoning the simple threshold of 10,000 inhabitants as the dividing line between rural and urban, we can pay attention to the urban environments of rural communities. More specifically, we can pay attention to the provincial scale. Spanish provinces are very diverse when it comes to size and number of cities. Thus there is an urban continuum that goes from the Madrid province (where in 2001 the capital city was close to 3 million inhabitants and 14 other cities had more than 50,000 inhabitants) to provinces such as Soria (where there is only one city and its population is smaller than 40,000). Under these conditions, the provincial scale enables us to incorporate the basic insight of the rural-urban continuum.

## **Rural population trends in modern Europe**

There were three great phases in the modern evolution of Europe’s rural population (table 1-1). The first phase, between 1700 and 1850, was a phase of generalised growth. During the second phase, between 1850 and 1950, it is likely that Europe’s rural population went on growing, but it did so more slowly than before as a consequence of the first modern episodes of depopulation. Finally, the third phase, from 1950 onwards, was a period of decrease in rural population during which there was rural depopulation in many countries. In order to describe in more detail each of these three phases, we have selected a small sample of large countries. Around 1950 only eight European countries had more than 10 million rural inhabitants. One of them, however, was Yugoslavia, a country for which sources were problematic (see Appendix A). We have kept the other seven countries: three from the Northwest (England, France and Germany), two from the South (Italy and Spain) and two from the East (Poland and Romania). In 1950, these seven countries together had more than 100 million rural inhabitants – about two thirds of Europe’s total rural population.

**Table 1-1. Europe's rural population**

	Rural population (millions)		Rural as a percentage of total population		Rural population change (mean annual percentage rate)	
	Bairoch	United Nations	Bairoch	United Nations	Bairoch	United Nations
1700	89.4		88			
1800	135.4		88		0.4	
1850	164.7		81		0.4	
1910	184.9		59		0.2	
1950	181.0	174.9	49	45	-0.1	
1980	155.2	159.2	36	33	-0.6	-0.3
2007		153.3		29		-0.1

Source: Appendix A.

**Table 1-2. Rural population change (mean annual percentage rate) in a sample of European countries**

	1700- 1800	1850- 1910	1910- 1950	1950- 1970	1970- 2000
England	0.4	-0.2	0.2	0.9	0.7
France	0.3	-0.3	-0.5	-1.2	-0.1
Germany	0.5	0.0	-0.6	0.0	0.1
Italy	0.3	0.4	0.2	-0.6	-0.1
Spain	0.4	0.3	0.3	-0.9	-0.3
Poland	0.4	n.a.	n.a.	0.1	-0.2
Romania	n.a.	0.6	0.5	0.0	-0.5

n.a.: not available

Sources: Appendixes A and B.

## Before 1850

Rural population grew all across Europe between the early eighteenth century and the middle of the nineteenth century (Armengaud 1973). According to our estimates, Europe's rural population grew from some 90 to 165 million. Because this growth was approximately similar to that of the urban population, mid-nineteenth century Europe was nearly as rural as pre-industrial Europe: more than 80 per cent of the population lived in