

# ANNOTATIONS

## DEMOGRAPHIC YEARBOOK, 1952<sup>1</sup>

THE general nature of the DEMOGRAPHIC YEARBOOK, published by the Statistical Office of the United Nations, has been described in previous annotations of the *Quarterly*.<sup>2</sup> As described by the editors, "Most of the statistics presented in the *Demographic Yearbook* are derived from questionnaires sent by the Statistical Office of the United Nations to the governments or administrations of all the geographic units or 'countries' of the world."<sup>3</sup> Each successive issue covers a series of basic topics. However, a rotating scheme is used whereby a given topic is treated in special detail in each issue. Thus, data on marriage and fertility were employed in the 1949-50 volume and data on mortality were stressed in the 1951 issue. "The present (1952) issue of the *Demographic Yearbook* is concerned mainly with recent data on the geographic distribution of population and draws heavily upon results of the 1950 and 1951 censuses of population. The statistical tables deal with the following aspects of the general subject: distribution of the population by major civil divisions; urban and rural population, by sex; population of agglomerations or localities, classified by number of inhabitants; and the population of each city of 100,000 or more inhabitants and of each national capital or major administrative centre. A chapter on urban trends and characteristics is also included."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Statistical Office. DEMOGRAPHIC YEARBOOK, Fourth issue, 1952, New York, 518 pp. \$7.50 (cloth), \$6.00 (paper).

<sup>2</sup> Milbank Memorial Fund *Quarterly*, January, 1952, xxx, No. 1, pp. 91-93, and October, 1952, xxx, No. 4, pp. 391-395.

<sup>3</sup> DEMOGRAPHIC YEARBOOK, Fourth issue, 1952, p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

Although its central theme is geographic distribution, the last volume of DEMOGRAPHIC YEARBOOK contains one new table on divorce rates and two new tables "presenting statistics of resettlement and repatriation of refugees under the auspices of the International Refugee Organization."

DEMOGRAPHIC YEARBOOK has been a boon to students of population and vital statistics throughout the world. Its publication provides them a stream of up-to-date demographic statistics and it is helping to stimulate various countries to improve their national statistical systems.

CLYDE V. KISER

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### PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION<sup>1</sup>

THIS recent report by the United Nations' Department of Social Affairs, despite its somewhat ambitious title, is a carefully documented inventory and analysis of selected social conditions throughout the world. This publication is the result of an invitation to the Economic and Social Council by the General Assembly to prepare a report outlining and summarizing the world's social needs by analyzing data available to the United Nations that is collected in the course of its official duties. Reliance on limited secondary sources is, of course, a serious restriction. This and other limitations, inherent both in the organization and scope of the project, are enumerated fully in the Preface and throughout the various chapters. Especially crucial are problems of the reliability of the data, its incompleteness, and the comparability of the statistics.

The report is organized around the following topics: population, health, food and nutrition, housing, education, work and employment conditions, and standards of living. Relying primarily on quantitative indices of these phenomena, the appropriate statistics for each cooperating nation are presented and discussed in a manner which enables comparison. In order to delimit the scope of the inquiry, attention is focussed on exist-

<sup>1</sup> United Nations, Department of Social Affairs. PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION. New York, 1952, 180 pp.