

II. POPULATION

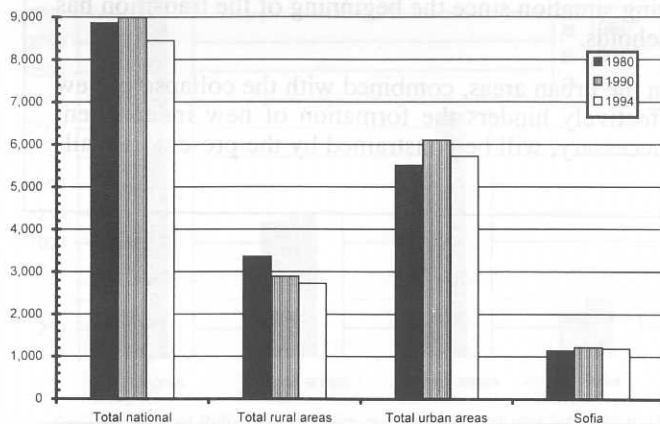
A. Population development 1980-1994

The total population of Bulgaria increased by 130,000 during the period 1980-1990; it fell by 550,000 between 1990 and 1994.

The urban population rose by 590,000 between 1980 and 1990, then decreased by 380,000 between 1990 and 1994. The rural population declined steadily during the whole period, by 630,000 from 1980 to 1994 (fig. I).

FIGURE I

Population development, 1980-1994
(in thousands)



Sources: Annual Bulletin of Housing and Building Statistics for Europe and North America, 1995, UN/ECE, and Statistical Yearbook, 1993, NSI.

B. Internal migration

Within the country there has been a marked increase in migration from 104,000 in 1980 to 179,000 in 1993

TABLE 1

In-country migration, 1980-1993
(in thousands)

	1980	1990	1993
Rural areas:			
—Total migration ^a	78.0	105.6	125.5
—Net migration	-37.2	-15.4	-14.9
Urban areas:			
—Total migration ^a	130.2	201.1	233.3
—Net migration	37.2	15.4	14.9
Sofia:			
—Total migration ^a	10.9	19.5	28.1
—Net migration	3.1	-1.9	1.8

Source: NSI bulletin, Population, 1980, 1990, 1993.

^a Sum of in- and out-migration.

(table 1). Throughout this period the rural areas have lost population to the cities. The capital city Sofia does not, however, attract as many migrants as could be expected.

C. Emigration

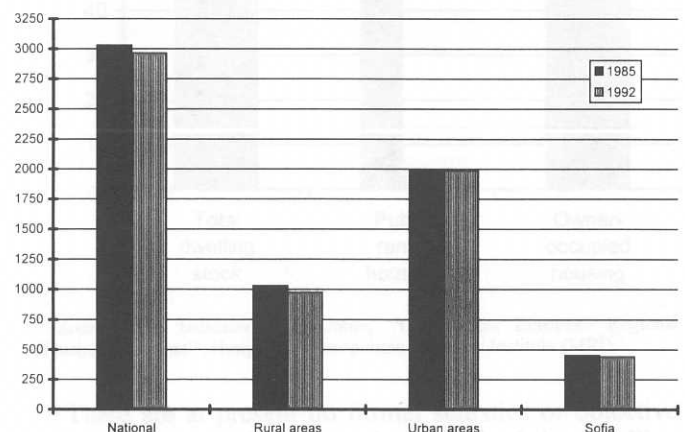
In the period 1991-1993 annual average net emigration from Bulgaria to western countries was 13,000 compared with some 85,000 from Albania and 7,000 from Hungary.¹

D. Household formation

The number of households in Bulgaria decreased by 2.2 per cent between the two census years 1985 and 1992. The major part of this reduction took place in the rural areas as a consequence of the considerable population loss there. The urban areas as a whole have only maintained their number of households from 1985 to 1992 with a small increase in Sofia, despite the increase in population during this period (fig. II).

FIGURE II

Number of households, 1985-1992
(in thousands)



Source: NSI, 1992 census results, vol. IV, 1994.

¹ Source: Economic Survey of Europe in 1994-1995, UN/ECE.

TABLE 2
Persons per household, 1985 and 1992

	1985	1992
National	2.9	2.9
Rural areas	3.2	2.9
Urban areas	2.8	2.9
Sofia	2.5	2.6

Source: Expert estimates.

Estimates of the number of persons per household show significant changes from 1985 to 1992. Whilst the national average remains approximately constant at 2.9 persons per household, the rural average *decreased* by 0.3 persons per household. The urban average *increased* by 0.1 persons per household, which was also the increase in Sofia (table 2).

Summary of core issues

The transition put an end to the internal migration of the population from rural to urban areas. The transition period has seen a considerable net emigration from Bulgaria, and a sharply reduced, constant rate of net migration from rural to urban areas.

The availability of housing is one important factor influencing the formation of new independent households. The opportunity to choose when and where to establish one's own household is an important aspect of the quality of life. It is also important from a macroeconomic point of view, particularly with regard to the mobility of labour.

Both the general decrease in the number of households and the different trends of household size within the country seem strongly to support the view that the housing situation since the beginning of the transition has negatively affected the formation of new, independent households.

In particular, the approximately constant population in the urban areas, combined with the collapse of new housing construction in these areas after the transition effectively hinders the formation of new independent households. Economic expansion in these areas, although necessary, will be constrained by the present unavailability of housing.