

France: population strategies

France has some of the most extensive state-funded childcare facilities in Europe. Diagram **B** shows some of the ways France is encouraging people to have more children in order to maintain its fertility rate. Immigration from southern Europe and former French colonies in North Africa has contributed one quarter of all population growth in recent years, but the growth is due mainly to immigration, and not to a rise in the fertility rate.

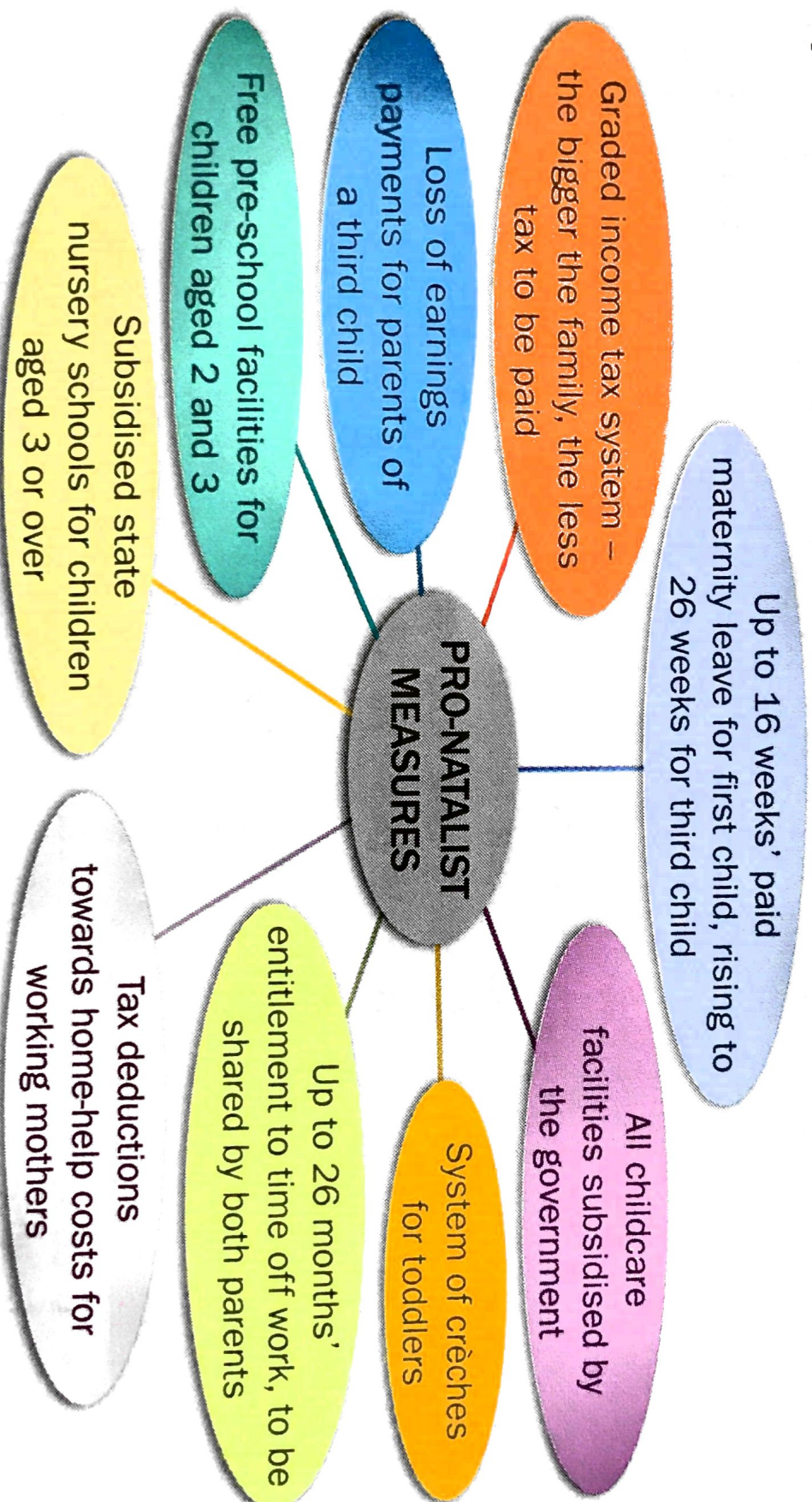
France's pro-natalist policy has clearly been successful in stabilising its fertility rate (table **A**). One of the country's most popular strategies

has been the *Carte Familles Nombreuses* ('Large Family Card'). This gives families with three or more children reductions on the national train network and half-price fares on the Paris Metro underground system. Families living in Paris, the French capital, also have a *Carte Paris-Famille* ('Paris Family Card'), which gives children free entrance to all swimming pools and subsidised entry to other sports facilities provided by the city.

Skills link



See Section 4.3 pages 208–09 to learn more about drawing bar graphs.



B

Pro-natalist measures taken by the French government

- 1 a What do you think of the French 'Family Card' schemes?
 - b Would your family, or any family that you know, qualify for this card if it was available in your country?
 - c Comment on the success (or failure) of these countries in maintaining their fertility rate since 1980.
- 2 a Use the data in table **A** to create a bar graph showing the fertility rates for each country, for 1980 and 2011, and the change in fertility rate between 1980 and 2011. Shade the three bars for each country in three different colours.
 - b From the results shown in your table, what kinds of benefit are most likely to persuade French parents to have a larger family?
- b Draw a line across your graph at 2.1; annotate this line to explain its significance.

Type of benefit	Economic	Educational	Recreational
Childcare facilities			
Crèches for toddlers			
Entitlement to time off work			
Graded income tax system			
Large Family Card			
Loss of earnings payments			
Maternity leave			
Nursery schools			
Paris Family Card			
Pre-school facilities			
State nursery schools			
Working mothers' tax deductions			
Total (ticks)			