

BABY BUST^{or} NEW BEGINNING?

Over the past five decades, fertility rates have fallen worldwide, driven by education, urbanization, and social change. Two-thirds of the world's population now lives in countries where the total fertility rate—the average number of children a woman is expected to have over her lifetime—is below the replacement level of 2.1.

The global trend toward lower fertility has sparked panic around a “baby bust”—that shrinking populations will mean too few workers, weaker economies, and overstretched social systems. While this shift does bring challenges, it also reflects major social and economic progress.

To help cut through the noise, PRB has created new a tip sheet for journalists that contextualizes fertility decline, debunks common myths, and assesses policy responses. Preview some popular myths below, then view the full tip sheet online for more data and evidence to support your reporting.

**GET THE FULL
TIP SHEET HERE:**



8 Big Myths About Fertility Decline

- 1 People in low-fertility countries don't want kids anymore.
- 2 Rising infertility is causing fertility decline.
- 3 Child benefits and tax credits can reverse low fertility.
- 4 Paid parental leave and expanded childcare programs can boost fertility rates.
- 5 Cutting access to contraception or abortion will raise fertility.
- 6 Immigration can compensate for low fertility.
- 7 Women's career ambitions are driving low fertility, so returning to “traditional family values” would boost births.
- 8 Population aging will inevitably bankrupt pension systems and leave economies without enough workers to function.

LEARN MORE

Get expert responses to these myths—and more insights to support your reporting.

bit.ly/lowfertilitytipsheet