

《两孩政策生效以来中国出生人口首次下降》

出生人口同比下降似乎表明，放宽独生子女政策未能扭转生育率下降。经济学家警告，中国面对人口迅速老龄化和劳动力短缺。



The annual number of births in China has fallen for the first time since Beijing relaxed its one-child policy, suggesting that the reform has failed to reverse declining fertility rates that economists warn are a long-term threat to the country's development.

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There were 17.23m births in China in 2017, down from 17.86m the previous year, the country's national statistics bureau said on Thursday.

????????????????2017????????1723????????1786????????

The ruling Communist party's policy allowing all couples to have two children came into force in 2016, leading to a 1.3m increase in births that year compared with 2015.

????????????????????2016????????????2015???130???

Analysts said that the rise in births in 2016 was probably a one-off as couples who had been waiting to have a

second child did so as soon as the policy changed.

??????2016??

“Some people took advantage of the lifting of the ban but most Chinese, even in rural areas, are concerned about how to pay for education??.?.?Its very hard to encourage people to have more children,” said Martin Whyte, a professor of sociology at Harvard University.

“????????????????????-????????-?????????????.....?????????????”????(Harvard University)????????(Martin King Whyte)???

Economists have warned that falling birth rates in China are leading to a rapid ageing of the population and creating a shortage of workers. That is placing a greater burden on social services even while per capita incomes in the country lag behind developed nations, which have struggled with declining fertility rates for decades.

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“China is experiencing problems that mostly more developed countries have experienced for a long time,” added Mr Whyte.

“?????????????????????????????????”??????

By about the middle of this century, one in every three Chinese people is forecast to be aged more than 60. Beijing expects the country's population to peak in about 2030 at 1.4bn, before going into a gradual decline.

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Analysts say shifts in attitudes, such as a greater emphasis on investing in children's education, are lowering the country's fertility rate. Some demographers say that these trends were evident even before the one-child policy was introduced in 1979, meaning the demographic shift would have happened regardless.

??1979????????????????????????????

Stuart Gietel-Basten, a demography expert at the University of Oxford, said: “Starting a family and having children in China is really hard work??.?.?Age at marriage is creeping up finally, which will also depress fertility rates.”

????(University of Oxford)?????????????.???-??? (Stuart Gietel-Basten)???“?????????????????????.....????????????????????”

To counter the falling birth rate, some Chinese commentators are advocating tax breaks and subsidies to encourage couples to have more children.

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The introduction of the two-child policy affected China's urban residents more than those in rural areas, mainly because the policy was not enforced as stringently outside the cities.

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But Chinese city dwellers tend to have a preference for fewer children, partly because they perceive the costs of raising a child as prohibitive and because women in cities are more educated. "The change disproportionately affected urban couples who have lower fertility preference anyway," added Mr Gietel-Basten.

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