

Type of event: policy, population growth	Location: China
Issue details: China's longstanding "one-child policy" is being changed to a "two-child policy", China is looking to fix damage caused by their old policy by changing it to the new two-child policy, it is too soon to tell how drastically the two-child policy will affect china and its future	Agencies/people involved: The Communist Party of China, the National Health and Family Planning Commission of China, Chinese citizens



Chinese boy looking at reflection
Photo by: Ed Jones via The New Yorker



Chinese girl walking with flags
Photo by: Tomohiro Ohsumi via The New Yorker

Summary: China is known infamously for having the largest population in the world. In 1979 China adopted a (globally controversial) one-child policy in an attempt to control their population and slow down its growth. This policy meant it was illegal for couples to have more than one child. Those who have had more than one child faced severe punishments such as forced abortion, loss of employment, denial of state recognition and birth certificates for second (or more) children, hefty fines, serialization and so on. The one-child policy prevented approximately 400 million births since its implementation but did not come without major demographic and social consequences such as gendered abortions and female child abandonment or female infanticide resulting in a larger male population than female as well as a rapid aging population with fewer young people to care for them. Most recently, China announced reforms on the policy to lessen punishment for women having a second child leading up to March of 2015; when China hopes to officially replace this long reigning policy with a new two-child policy thus legitimizing two children per couple. This change would help relieve some cultural pressure around the need to succeed or support their parents that many younger Chinese people feel as an only child of their family. Officials of the National Health and Family Planning Commission say that the policy change is due to China's concerns for their rapidly aging population and the future stability of their economy. Many are criticizing this as a quick fix to the damage caused by a haste and radical decision that could have been solved in a less severe way resulting in better long term effects. Birth rates of a country decline when more women are educated and become largely integrated into the work force; perhaps if China focused on reforms around such issues rather than strict birth policies then they would not be experiencing the social and demographic backlash that they currently are looking to fix. Moreover, even with the change in policy, The Communist Party of China is still far from undoing the decades of damage caused by the one-child policy that warped the cultural, social and demographic underpinnings of Chinese society into what we see today.

Source: http://www.bbc.com ; http://www.newyorker.com/ ; http://www.theguardian.com ; http://www.ft.com/ ; http://sinosphere.blogs.nytimes.com/ ; http://www.earth-policy.org/ ; http://news.xinhuanet.com/	Data: October 31, 2015 to November 2, 2015, with ongoing new articles releasing new information
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