

Family Policy & Population Research Forum 2024: Exploring Global Fertility Trends, Family Dynamics, and Solutions

**Organised by the NGO Committee on the Family, NY
in partnership with the Permanent Mission of Hungary to the UN
on the occasion of the 57th Session of the UN Commission on Population and Development**

**Wednesday, 1 May, 2024, 1:15-2:30 p.m.
Conference Room 8, UN Headquarters, New York**

Concept Note

As it is highlighted by the latest report of UN Secretary-General on the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action ([E/CN.9/2024/2](#)), the world is now entering into a pivotal phase of demographic transition. While rapid population growth continues to pose a challenge and an opportunity to a considerable number of countries worldwide, an important number of other countries are experiencing an increasing demographic decline and population ageing. Fertility levels have fallen from a global average of 5 live births per woman in 1950 to 2.3 births in 2021, and this trend is projected to continue and result in an overall decline of fertility below replacement level – 2.1 births per women - worldwide by 2050. The subsequent population decline and ageing, which will likely impact all regions of the world at the mid-century mark, brings with itself possible economic and social ramifications, such as an increased demand for investments into policies and services supporting the elderly, paired with a smaller population in working age contributing to the economy. While demography is also shaped by other trends, such as population movements, decreasing mortality levels or the increase in life expectancy, the current panel discussion will contribute to the wider discussion on demographic policies by focusing specifically on policies related to fertility.

While examining these global trends, it is crucial to focus also on the personal family goals of women and men, parents and parents-to-be, as their aspirations, expectations and needs play a central role in family formation and childbearing. As the above report of the Secretary-General points it out, while millions of women around the world still have unmet needs for family planning, women in many ageing societies are having overall fewer children than they would desire. Fertility policies, therefore, have an important role to play in unearthing and addressing the underlying reasons for unrealized fertility goals, such as financial insecurity, the lack of adequate childcare, parental leave or work-life balance policies, among others.

When fertility policies are well designed and accompanied by a supportive social and family policies, they do not only enable parents in fulfilling their desired family goals, and contribute to a sustained population level, but they also play an important role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, such as ending poverty and hunger, achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, fostering decent work and reducing inequalities.

In this context, the present side event will showcase a review of some of the current academic literature related to population and family dynamics, examining what makes an effective policy, and discussing the success rate of policies intended to mitigate sub-replacement fertility from various national contexts. By doing so, the event will provide an opportunity for delegates, researchers and international policymakers to discuss how policy choices influence family formation and fertility, and supply evidence to inform future policy-making, so that Member States, together with all relevant stakeholders, can better support present and upcoming generations in their family goals and contribute to stabilizing fertility levels on the long term.

Program

Introductory remarks:

H.E. Mrs. Zsuzsanna Horváth, Permanent Representative of Hungary to the UN

H.E. Mr. Joonkook Hwang, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the UN (*invited*)

Presentation of research papers:

Lyman Stone: “The Fertility Gap and Economic Freedom” (2023).

The author is PhD Candidate in Sociology at McGill University, Montreal, and Research Fellow at the Institute for Family Studies.

Rachel Fung: “Welfare Reform and Fertility” (2022).

The author is PhD Candidate in Economics at Princeton University, New Jersey.

Daisoon Kim: “Parental Leave, Fertility, and Labor Supply” (2023).

The authors: Daisoon Kim is an Assistant Professor of Economics at North Carolina State University, and Minchul Yum is an Associate Professor in Economics at the University of Southampton, United Kingdom, and Research Affiliate at the Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR), London.

Panel discussion moderated by Ryan Koch, Executive Member of NGOFCF

Questions and comments from the floor

Closing