



One Child Policy is Over

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China has ended its decades-long one-child policy to allow all couples to have two children. The ruling Communist Party of China made the announcement on Thursday. The one-child policy, officially called the family planning policy, was a population control measure that was introduced in 1979. Policy makers hoped to restrict the country's surging population and therefore control rates of poverty. It wasn't adhered to strictly and many exceptions were allowed. In 2007, around 36 per cent of China's population was subject to a strict one-child restriction. An additional 53 per cent was allowed to have a second child if the first child was a girl. The new two-child policy will reverse China's very low fertility rate.

The new two-child policy is expected to provide a huge economic boost for China and prevent it from developing into an ageing society. China's labour force reached a peak of 940 million in 2012. However, this decreased to 930 million in 2014 and was expected to fall by another 29 million by 2020. Predictions from Peking University are that there will be an average of 2.5 million extra newborns per year. This will result in more workers and an additional \$11.8 billion in annual consumption. Shares in many international baby goods companies jumped by over 10 per cent after the news was announced. The new policy will affect around 100 million couples.

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New Words or Phrases

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