

Pro-Natalist Policies in Singapore



Pronatalist policy – tries to increase birth rate. You cannot force people to have children, so you have to offer incentives e.g. free education.

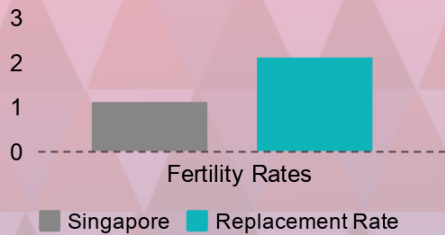


Incentives – such as money, extended maternity leave and paternity leave and pay, free or subsidized childcare, healthcare and education. Reduced cost of these services reduces the cost of having children thus reducing the burden on parents so they can go to work.

Why was the policy put in place?

1966-1982, Singapore had an anti-natalist policy, but it worked too well and therefore a Pronatalist policy had to be introduced in 2001.

Singapore's Fertility Rate V.S. Replacement Level (Before the policy)



Solutions:



Marriage and parenthood packages (2013)

- making it faster and easier to get housing to support in early marriage or birth,
- providing support for contraception and delivery costs, further defraying child raising costs including healthcare costs.
- Middle-income Singaporean households enjoy \$24,000 in Baby bonus cash.

-The size of Singapore is 710.2 km², (small) = housing is expensive. Bigger houses offered as a result of having more children.

-Slogan changed from 'stop at two' to 'have 3 if you can afford it'. This policy was only aimed at the more affluent educated people as they want to maintain their status in the world economy (5th highest GDP in the world)

To overcome worker shortages, the government encourages immigration but is also trying to increase the population through rising birth rates. They have increased benefits to cover the cost of maternity leave for first 4 babies and therefore parents don't have to worry about security of their work to support their children.



Financial consideration – there is a high cost of living in Singapore. Parents want higher standards for children therefore work longer and have fewer children.

Main Issue with the New Policy:

Changing the mindset of the people

- **Social barrier** – Highly educated women tend to have more difficulty with finding suitable spouses.
- A solution for this would be the Romanticizing Singapore scheme:
 1. State sponsored matchmaking events
 2. Rock climbing for couples
 3. Love boat river race
 4. Private sponsors have made their own contributions including spa packages and tango parties
 5. Weekend getaways like a love boat cruise
 6. Pizza hut offering a 3-course 'love meal' including a heart shaped pizza.

Lifestyle choice – Some people choose to remain single, get married older or have fewer children. Mean age of marriage increases over 2008 to 2012: males from 29.8 to 30.1 and for females, from 27.3 to 28. Fertility rates (per female) have increased from 1.15 to 1.29, however this is nowhere near the replacement rate they would like.