

Population

Issue 52 | July 2022

Towards a Better Life for the Population

A Quarterly Review issued by the Technical Office of the Permanent Population Committee, Planning and Statistics Authority

- Preliminary results of the fifth and final phase of the follow-up to the implementation of Qatar's Second Population Policy.
- Fertility determinants in Qatar.
- Qatar's Participation in the meetings of the 55th session of the United Nations Commission on Population and Development under the Theme «Population and Sustainable Development», 25-29 April 2022.





Publisher:

Technical Office of the Permanent Population Committee,
Issue No. 52.

General Supervisor:

Dr. Saleh M. Al-Nabit, Chairman of the Permanent
Population Committee and President of the Planning and
Statistics Authority

Editor

Mr. Abdul Hadi Saleh Al Marri

General Coordinator:

Dr. Abdullah Mohammed Al Hammadi

Translation and proofreading:

Mohamed Elsharqawy, and Ziad Mohammed Naasani

Graphic Designer:

Osama AlManasir

 ppc.gov.qa

 ppc@psa.gov.qa

 (+974) 44958653

 (+974) 44838976

 1855, Doha – Qatar

Read in this issue:

- Preliminary results of the fifth and final phase of the follow-up to the implementation of Qatar's Second Population Policy
- Fertility determinants in Qatar.
- Qatar's Participation in the meetings of the 55th session of the United Nations Commission on Population and Development under the Theme «Population and Sustainable Development», 25-29 April 2022.
- Activities of the Technical Office of the Permanent Population Committee.
 - Participation in the United Nations Session on Population and Development.
 - The Permanent Population Committee holds its first post-reconstitution regular meeting on 15 June 2022.
 - The Permanent Population Committee Organizes Training Sessions for Students of QU's Department of Sociology on 5-8 June 2022.
- Studies and Research
 - United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, Global Population Growth and Sustainable Development, New York, 2022.
 - United Nations - Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, World Population Policies 2021, policies related to fertility, 2022.
 - United Nations (ESCWA) - COVID-19 Pandemic in the Arab Region – Beirut, 2022.
 - Planning and Statistics Authority - General Population, Housing and Establishments Census 2020.
 - Planning and Statistics Authority - Annual Bulletin of Economic Activities Statistics 2020.
 - Planning and Statistics Authority - Annual Bulletin of Vital Statistics - Births and Deaths 2020.
 - Planning and Statistics Authority - Marriage and Divorce in the State of Qatar 2020.

Editorial



I am pleased to present to our readers the 52nd issue of «Sukkan» Population magazine, whose first topic includes a detailed presentation of the work program of Qatar's Second Population Policy (2017-2022) five years after its launch, following the rapid demographic developments that the country witnessed during that period .

In order to objectively evaluate the population policy action program, the Permanent Population Committee has decided to re-apply the same questionnaire that was applied in the first phase (November 2017-October 2018) of the follow-up phases of the implementation of the Second Population Policy, as a methodological tool to know the extent of actual progress in achieving each of the goals approved in this program.

The main article of this issue, entitled «Fertility Determinants in Qatar», explains in detail a study conducted by Doha International Institute to identify the factors affecting the decline in fertility rates in the Qatari society, and proposes policies, best practices and procedures based on scientific evidence, which contributes to raising the current fertility rates or reduce its decline.

This issue also reviews the participation of the Permanent Population Committee in the 55th session of the United Nations Population and Development Commission held in New York on 25-29 April 2022. The agenda of this session included many important issues, on top of which was the discussion of the main theme of the session «Population and Sustainable Development» and follow-up of the actions and endeavors to achieve the work program of the International Conference population and development at the global, regional and national levels.

Dr. Saleh M. Al Nabit

Chairman of the Permanent Population Committee

Preliminary results of the fifth and final phase of the follow-up to the implementation of Qatar's Second Population Policy



Prepared by Dr. Youssef Brik,
the Permanent Population Committee

Pursuant to the work program of the fifth and final phase (November 2021-October 2022) of the follow-up to the implementation of the Second Population Policy, which was presented in the previous issue (51) of «Sukkan» magazine, the components of this program have been implemented. They included data collection process and brainstorming sessions, in addition to a survey on the most important demographic issues facing the Qatari society.

Starting from the beginning of January 2022, the data collection process was launched, with the participation of six working groups comprising 49 members, including the group leaders who represent various government and non-government entities in the country. Despite the short period set for collecting data, the six working groups have been able to accomplish their tasks, as this phase was characterized by the cooperation between all parties concerned with implementing the population policy work program with the working groups in charge of follow-up. After completing the data collection process by the end of February 2022, the Technical Office of the Permanent Population Committee reviewed and audited the data collected from government and non-government agencies. After completing the review and audit of the data collected by the working groups, the Technical Office dealt with the results of data collection and utilized its outputs in the Second Population Policy assessment process, as detailed in the following paragraph.

Evaluation of Qatar's Second Population Policy (2017-2022)

Five years after the launch of the Second Population Policy work program, the Permanent Population Committee noted the need to conduct a detailed evaluation process for that program, especially after the rapid population developments that the state witnessed during that period. The Population policy is not a one-time accomplishment, but rather a continuous process whose objectives change with the changing demographic reality of Qatar, and its procedures evolve with each new development.

In order for the evaluation to be objective, the PPC Technical Office decided to re-conduct the same questionnaire that was conducted in the

first phase (November 2017-October 2018) of the follow-up phases of the implementation of the Second Population Policy, as a methodological tool to know the actual progress in achieving each of the goals approved in this program.

The said evaluation tool has provided the methodological conditions necessary for comparing the results of the first phase with those of the fifth phase of the follow-up to the implementation of the population policy action program. This can be considered as the starting point for the actual evaluation process in which the methodological mechanism that includes a scale for weighing procedures was used in order to determine the level of progress in achieving the goals set in the population policy document, as shown in Table (1).

Table (1) indicates a remarkable progress in achieving the approved goals in the Second Population Policy Work Program, mainly:

- Number of goals achieved to a great extent is (12) out of (18), or 67% of total approved goals.
- Number of goals achieved to some extent is (4) out of (18), or 22% of total approved goals.
- Number of goals not achieved for one reason or another is (2), or 11% of total approved goals.

General features of Qatar's Third Population Policy (2023-2027)

In October 2022, the period specified for the implementation of the Second Population Policy Work Program ends, with which the process of drawing up the general features of the Third Population Policy begins, taking into account the following population developments:

- The population growth rate in Qatar has begun to decline, as Figure (1) shows the rate decreased in recent years from 10% in 2015 to 1.2% in 2020.

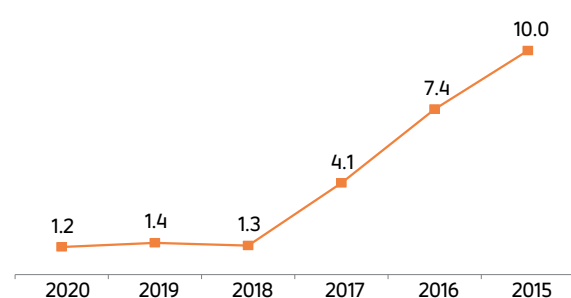
The main reason for the decline in the annual population growth rate in Qatar is the decline in the number of expatriate workers, which is in line with the goals of the Second Population Policy, which calls for reducing the demographic structure imbalance by reducing labor recruitment and elimination of redundant workers.

In connection with the foregoing, the demographic structure is expected start recovering relatively during this decade, for several reasons, mainly: The State of Qatar has begun a gradual transformation towards a knowledge-based economy through its quest to catch up with information and communication technology and digital education (digitization), which, in light of the Corona pandemic, has become an important requirement of the knowledge society in our contemporary world. This means that qualified and highly skilled human resources



Table (1): Level of progress in achieving the goals by the final relative weight of implemented procedures in each axis

Axis	No. of Approved goals		No. of Approved Procedures	Final relative weight of implemented procedures	Evaluation Results		
					Goals		
					Level of progress in achieving the goals (by the final relative weight of implemented procedures)		
					Not achieved	Achieved to some extent	Achieved to great extent
					or more 80%	50-79%	Less than 50%
Population & labor force	5	Goal 1	6	59.7%			
		Goal 2	5	80%			
		Goal 3	7	92.8%			
		Goal 4	4	88%			
		Goal 5	4	100%			
Urban growth, housing and the environment	3	Goal 1	6	83.5%			
		Goal 2	5	62.8%			
		Goal 3	2	100%			
Education, training and youth	4	Goal 1	3	100%			
		Goal 2	3	100%			
		Goal 3	2	87%			
		Goal 4	2	83%			
Public health and reproductive health	2	Goal 1	6	87.1%			
		Goal 2	7	49.9%			
women and children	2	Goal 1	3	32.1%			
		Goal 2	2	53.2%			
The elderly and persons with disabilities	2	Goal 1	4	72.6%			
		Goal 2	6	84.3%			
Total	18	-	77	-	12	4	2
	-	-	-	-	67%	22%	11%

Figure 1: Population growth rate according to mid-year estimates during the period (2020-2015)

Source: Planning and Statistics Authority, Chapter of Population, Mid-Year Estimates of the Population in Qatar.

will be the most valuable asset in the modern Qatari economy. The aforementioned efforts of the State of Qatar are being translated into massive investments in this area, and in the achievement of Qatar Science and Technology Park, Qatar Research, Development and Innovation Strategy 2030, National Artificial Intelligence Strategy for Qatar...etc.

Thus, the efforts aimed at catching up with information and communication technology and digital education (digitization) have resulted in the State of Qatar occupying advanced ranks globally in many indices related to digital economy, as indicated in Table (2) below.

- Since 2020, the major urbanization phase witnessed by Qatar has begun to shrink, and will witness more modest levels of investment in the coming years.
- The labor force share of the construction and building sector, which

Table (2): Some indices that show progress in digital infrastructure in Qatar at the international level

S.	Index	Rank	Year
1	E-Government Index	66 out of 193 countries	2020
2	E- Participation Index	77 out of 193 countries	2020
3	Network readiness Index	38 out of 134 countries	2020
4	Global Innovation Index (GII)	70 out of 131 countries	2020
5	DARE INDEX	1st in the world	2020

Source: Planning and Statistics Authority and Ministry of Transport and Communications (included in: Planning and Statistics Authority, Qatar Voluntary National Review 2021)

amounted to 38% in 2014, has begun to decline sharply after 2020, and is approaching the shares in other countries.

The oil and gas sector is witnessing a limited expansion in its production as a result of efficiency improvements.

The above does not mean in any way that a demographic balance is possible in the foreseeable future. So, it is necessary to coexist with some manifestations of imbalance and to consider it a comparative advantage that can be utilized to make further developmental achievements on the one hand and to keep the wheel of economy up and running on the other hand. The feasibility of any development project (large or small) is measured by the number of its potential consumers, otherwise it will turn into an economic burden on the owners themselves.

Accordingly, it may be useful, when preparing the Third Population Policy, not to focus on the external factors of demographic imbalance, represented by the quantitative aspect of expatriate labor, but rather



to focus on their qualitative aspect, i.e. those that are necessary in the process of gradual transformation towards a knowledge economy on the one hand, and moving the wheel of economy on the other hand; skilled and highly skilled labor not only contribute to achieving the desired knowledge society, but also, at the same time, can consume the products of various service sectors, starting with food products and places of entertainment and tourism, to the real estate market, which has witnessed a remarkable expansion in recent times.

Based on the above, articulating the general features of the Third Population Policy requires not only taking into account the demographic reality, part of which has been presented, but also making use of the following sources:

- The outcome of the Second Population Policy evaluation, which indicated the need to formulate axial targets that unite the various components of each of the six population policy axes (population and labor force, urban growth, housing and the environment, education, training and youth, public health and reproductive health, women and children, the elderly and persons with disabilities), while preserving the content of most of the targets included in the previous program (as these targets were originally set to be achieved by 2030, in line with Qatar National Vision). Perhaps what justifies this approach is the interrelationship between the components of each axis, and thus the formulation of a single, precise and comprehensive target for each axis.
- In addition, the results of the evaluation showed the need to repeat the goals that were not achieved in the Second Population Policy with some additions related to the developments on ground. There is also a need to make a few adjustments to the goals that were achieved to some extent, whether in terms of content or in terms of procedures that must keep pace with the population transformations and developments.
- The results of the brainstorming sessions conducted by the six working groups immediately after completing the questionnaire for the fifth phase of the follow-up to the implementation of Qatar's

Second Population Policy by the end of February 2022. In March 2022, the working groups conducted the aforementioned sessions to get acquainted with the point of view of their employer on the most important population issues or challenges that could face the Qatari society in the foreseeable and medium term. These challenges justify the development of a third population policy that aims to intervene in order to solve them, or at least minimize their effects.

- The results of the survey on the most important demographic issues facing the Qatari society, which was implemented by the Permanent Population Committee, in cooperation with the Planning and Statistics Authority, for a period of one month, starting from Monday, 23.05.2022 until 22.06.2022 on a random sample from citizens and residents, by sending them an electronic link via SMS and a personal interview over the phone.

Based on all of the above, the first draft of the Third Population Policy will comprise two documents:

- First document: includes the developed general framework and the basic contents of the Third Population Policy.
- Second document: is the executive work program for the Third Population Policy.

In conclusion: For the Third Population Policy to be implemented successfully, after adoption and approval by the Council of Ministers, it requires coordination between most of the ministries, institutions and agencies concerned with implementing the work program of this policy. This should be done in a way that contributes to ensuring a decent life for the residents of Qatar, improving their capabilities, expanding their options and raising the level of their participation in the progress and advancement of the Qatari society. All of which shall be implemented within the framework of Qatar National Vision 2030 to achieve sustainable development and ensure the continuation of a decent life for its people, for generations to come.

Social Determinants of Fertility in the State of Qatar



Dr. Sharifa Nouman Al-Emadi
Executive Director, Doha International Family Institute

The State of Qatar and the other Gulf states are seeking to increase their population growth rates, in an effort to raise the proportion of citizens to their total population. The issue of fertility is of special importance to them, unlike most Arab countries that seek to limit the population growth rates of their citizens. The decline in the proportion of citizens to total population, and the decrease in their contribution to economic activity, may lead to the emergence of a number of economic, social, political, security and other challenges.

Below we present the details of a study by Doha International Family Institute (DIFI), a member of Qatar Foundation, on «Social Determinants of Fertility in the State of Qatar», which aimed to identify the factors that affect low fertility rates in the Qatari society, and to propose policies, best practices and procedures based on scientific evidence, which contributes to raising current fertility rates, or minimize their decline.

Statistics show that the fertility rate has witnessed remarkable declines, as the rate declined from 5.3% in 1986 to 4.6% in 1997, then to 4.5% in 2004. The following six years until 2010 witnessed the largest decline, reaching 3.6% in 2010 and 2.9% in 2017. This decline concurred with a rise in divorce rates and a decrease in the rate of marriage among Qatari citizens. As for the average age at first marriage, it has not witnessed significant changes during the last two decades, although it generally tends to rise.

The study conducted by DIFI and approved by Qatar National Research Ethical Committee, applied in its first part the qualitative analysis of in-depth interviews conducted by researchers with a purposive sample of 58 Qatari citizens (30 females and 28 males), and collected respondents' opinions on the factors that lead to the decline in fertility rates in the Qatari society, and ways to minimize it. Work is currently underway on the second part of the study, which is the quantitative survey phase to enhance the results and reach more credible methodological evidence.

Factors that affect the decision to have children

After interviewing the respondents, the main primary results of the study indicate that there 6 factors that affect the decision to have children; namely, personal, economic, structural or educational and work-related factors, as well as health factors.

First- Personal Factors: Most of the respondents emphasized their preference for birth control and being satisfied with two or three children, with females more likely than males to control birth or reduce the number of children, due to several reasons; mainly, the responsibilities of child rearing and attention to quality more than quantity, due to the high level of education and awareness and the change in perceptions about the importance of investing in children's education and sound social upbringing. The study revealed the interrelation between a woman's work and her high level of education, and the decision to limit childbearing.

Second- Economic Factors: They are summed up in the cost of the marriage ceremony and house construction. The respondents mentioned that families usually cover the costs associated with marriage, and

tend to marry from families of the same economic level. They further pointed out that there is a relationship between the costs of children's education and health care and the family planning decision, confirming that the increase in family income is accompanied by more tendencies towards living a luxurious life with fewer children. The study respondents indicated that the higher the level of well-being, the lower the rate of childbearing, and the greater the desire to enjoy life and travel, while enhancing the feeling of satisfaction with fewer children.

Third- Structural Factors: The female respondents attributed the reasons for the delay in marriage and the decline in its rates, and the high rates of celibacy to increased awareness, high rates of education, changes in lifestyle, and ease of communication with the outside world. The male respondents, on the other hand, attributed the reason to the inability to meet before marriage, and women growing up in closed environments, which discourage them to enter into a similar environment at a young age.

The structural factors included high divorce rates. According to the 2019 statistics, the total number of marriage contracts was 282, while the total number of divorce cases was 89, an average of one divorce for every three marriages. The respondents attributed this rise to several reasons; mainly women's preference for independence, the accumulation of debts, the family's interference in the affairs of the spouses and the conflict between the values of new and old generations.

Fourth- Educational Factors: Most of the respondents emphasized a correlation between the education level of the spouses and the number of children. The higher the level of education, the greater the desire to have fewer children. They pointed out the possibility of a correlation as well between a woman's education and employment with her decision to have children, as she tends to focus on her professional career rather than family obligations.

Fifth- Factors of Work-Family Balance Policies: The respondents emphasized that there is a conflict between achieving excellence/success and having children in the absence of flexible or supportive work policies of balancing between work and family.

In this context, the respondents suggested the extension of maternity leave, the provision of nurseries in the workplace, and the adoption of flexible work arrangements that encourage working women to marry and have children, and encourage housewives to engage in economic activities.

Sixth- Health Factors: The respondents emphasized a correlation between a healthy lifestyle and fertility rates, agreeing that the lifestyle of Qatari families affect the reproductive rates. The respondents focused on the importance of exercise to improve health in general, which helps in having healthy children, while laziness and obesity can negatively affect reproductive rates.

Some respondents linked the unhealthy lifestyle of Qatari families due to unhealthy food and lack of exercise to low fertility rates and high rates of infertility in both sexes.

On the other hand, they pointed out that modern biological technologies have contributed to the treatment of many cases of infertility and delayed childbearing.



They also pointed out that women's interest in slimness and physical fitness may affect their decision to have children.

Global Experiences

The study touched on best practices and global experiences, as many countries tried to limit the decline in fertility rates by developing and implementing policies and programs that helped stabilize fertility rates, including the experience of Singapore and France:

First- the Experience of Singapore: In 2001, Singapore launched a package of housing-related policies and others related to work-family balance, as well as providing material support and incentives that encourage childbearing, including: giving priority to obtaining housing for married couples. Hence, currently, more than 90% of citizens have their own houses. Singapore also decided to grant four months of paid maternity leave and one week of state paid paternity leave, as well as granting joint paid parental leave. It further allowed working mothers to choose to share a portion of their maternity leave with their husbands. Singapore offers state paid childcare leave and enhanced childcare leave, as well as unpaid childcare leave for those who wish, to enable working parents to spend time with and take care of their children. It has also set up a child development account, and offers grants, exemptions and tax credits to companies with flexible working arrangements.

Second- The Experience of France: The French government supports work-family reconciliation policies, most notably increasing the duration of parental leave as the number of children increases, supporting nurseries and kindergartens, and providing a flexible environment for parents to help them reconcile their professional responsibilities with family care and childbearing and raising. In addition, it provides more convenient financial benefits with the increase in the number of family members, giving parents a «birth grant» of about 950 euros, providing

monthly benefits for children, and granting families multiple allowances that increase based on the number of children. French families also get tax breaks and financial aid to cover the cost of childcare.

Recommendations

In the DIFI-conducted study, we recommended a package of policies divided into four categories, including policies for reconciliation between work and family responsibilities, policies for material support for marriage and childbearing, policies for raising awareness of mechanisms to increase fertility rates, and policies related to health aspects.

First: Policies for Reconciliation between Work and Family Responsibilities: The study recommends that the Labor Law is amended to grant pregnant female employees in all sectors (government, semi-government and private) a paid maternity leave for a period of six months, while allowing for an additional unpaid six month leave, provided that the employee returns to her job position without any modification resulting from the maternity leave, and to grant the father a paid leave of not less than one week.

Employers in all sectors with 20 or more female employees, must establish a nursery in the workplace that accommodates free of charge the children of male and female employees of the nursery age (less than three years), to be supervised by specialized nannies.

After returning from maternity leave, the employed mother must be allowed to work part-time, so that her wage is commensurate with the number of working hours. The remote work system must also be expanded, and accounting systems must be adopted to evaluate work based on achievement rather than working hours.

Second: Policies of Material Support for Marriage and Childbearing: The study recommends the establishment of a marriage fund, which provides financial support to newly married couples and those who intend to



marry, the value of which is commensurate with the financial situation of the spouses, so that the lower their income, the higher the reward. A Child Development Fund must be established to provide monthly subsidies, the value of which increases as the number of children in the family increases. Families should be granted financial aid to cover the costs of childcare, especially the costs of nurseries, kindergartens and private schools.

Further wedding halls need to be constructed to include all regions of the country, while upgrading the services provided therein, so that the state bears the expenses of food and hospitality, and encouraging the holding of mass wedding ceremonies in these halls.

There is also a need for facilitating and speeding up the procedures for securing housing for newly married couples, relieving them from paying a portion of the house building loan, provided that the relieved portion increases with the increase in the number of children.

Third: Policies for Raising Awareness of Mechanisms to Increase Fertility Rates: The study recommends conducting educational and cultural awareness campaigns on the media and social media platforms, and to include them in school activities, youth organizations, mosque sermons, family counseling centers .. etc. These campaigns must focus on raising awareness on the need to increase the number of citizens and their percentage to total population, and raising the level of their contribution to economic activity, in order to enhance the capabilities, progress and advancement of the country, and to avoid the dangers of overdependence on foreign labor in general, and of leaving children under the care of domestic workers in particular.

The traditional method of marriage must be developed to provide an adequate opportunity for acquaintance between the couples who are about to marry, in order to ensure that they are suitable for each other. Physical exercise activities and raising awareness of healthy diets must

also be encouraged, especially among females, by presenting successful models and experiences.

There is also a need to explain the international and local developments that call for changing the roles of family members, and that the spouses must cooperate in assuming the family responsibilities.

Fourth: Health-Related Policies: The study recommends the establishment of a specialized committee chaired by the Ministry of Public Health with members from medical and health authorities involved in service or research activities, to study fertility data from the health files and related statistics, and to submit a national action plan to address defects in this regard.

Finally, we recommend the expansion of research and studies on population and family issues periodically in the country and the dissemination of their results as widely as possible, to help the concerned authorities take appropriate decisions, and to familiarize the target audience with the actual reality of these issues away from rumors and possible exaggerations.

We here by stress the need to expand the establishment of specialized centers to rehabilitate those who are about to get married, supervised by specialists in psychology, pedagogy and sociology, which organize mandatory courses, provided that marriage is only concluded after passing these courses. Those who are about to marry must also be obliged to abide by the results of the medical examination before marriage, and to marry only after ensuring that both parties have the appropriate health conditions for marriage and childbearing.

We are still working with national actors to expand the evidence base in this project in cooperation with the Planning and Statistics Authority to conduct a comprehensive quantitative survey of the social factors of fertility in Qatar. After which, recommendations can be developed to be more focused in line with realistic needs at the societal level.

Activities and Events of PPC

Qatar's Participation in the Meetings of the 55th Session of the United Nations Commission on Population and Development, under the Theme "Population and Sustainable Development" New York, 25-29 April 2022

The State of Qatar participated in the meetings of the 55th session of the United Nations Population and Development Commission held in New York on 25-29 April 2022, with a high-level delegation headed by HE Dr. Saleh M. Al-Nabit, Chairman of the Permanent Population Committee and President of the Planning and Statistics Authority, and Mr. Abdul Hadi Al Marri, Director of the Technical Office of the Permanent Population Committee.

The session's agenda included many key issues, mainly the discussion of the session's main theme "Population and Sustainable Development" and the follow-up to the actions and endeavors taken to achieve the ICPD Program of Action at the global, regional and national levels.

A number of leaders of international organizations and bodies related to population issues spoke, reviewing the main features included in the international reports issued by their institutions, each with respect to the aspects related to population around the world, most notably:

- The demographic problems that the peoples of developing countries were suffering from in the past have reappeared more severe with the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the renewed conflicts around the world.
- In 2021, the global economy began to recover, however, it was soon affected severely by the ongoing turmoil and conflict in Ukraine, which resulted in food insecurity, and high energy prices in many countries.
- Exacerbation of the problems of poverty and inequality between different sectors.
- Discrimination against women and inequality with men.
- Steady population growth and a high aging rate.
- Environmental degradation and the climate crisis.

During his speech, HE Dr. Saleh M. Al-Nabit stressed that the State of Qatar has continued to attach special importance to the demographic factor through its project and continuous approach to building an advanced society, inspired by Qatar National Vision 2030, which aims to bring about quantitative and qualitative change in demographic variables and related issues. All of which will be implemented through a set of executive plans and programs that aim to achieve a balance between population growth and the requirements of sustainable development, in order to ensure a better life for the residents of the State of Qatar. «This approach has contributed to making important achievements in the fields of economy, urbanization, infrastructure, digitization, health, education and other vital fields, promoting the State of Qatar to rank 45 out of 189 countries in the UNDP Human Development Index 2020», added Mr. Al Nabit. His Excellency later reviewed the many achievements of the State of Qatar in the field of population and development, where the rate of

participation in the labor force reached 88.2% and the unemployment rate did not exceed 0.1%, both of which are two of the lowest rates in the world. He further pointed out to the continuous efforts of Qatar to improve the conditions of more than two million expatriate workers with their families, and provide them with a decent life. In addition, the State of Qatar has achieved progress and development in many fields, mainly health and education, and is focusing on women's education so that they become effectively and actively participating in the national work system. He also noted the economic recovery witnessed by the State of Qatar in recent decades, which has contributed to achieving high levels of economic growth, which in turn led to an increase in the level of individual incomes.

The participation of Qatar's Permanent Population Committee in this international event stems from the premise of activating the global partnership and cooperation that link the PPC with international institutions, as well as exchanging international experiences in the field of population and future strategic planning.

His Excellency concluded by expressing Qatar's aspiration and desire to continue working with the Population and Development Commission, and to strengthen partnership frameworks with it in various fields related to population and development.

The speakers made some recommendations, most notably:

- The 55th session's focus on sustained and inclusive economic growth emphasizes the need to include population considerations in national development strategies.
- Benefiting from the demographic dividend that characterizes the demographics in many developing countries.
- Abolishing laws and discriminatory social norms that impede the advancement of women and being equal with men.
- The need to empower women and youth.

Second: The Session's Draft Resolution

At the end of the session, a draft resolution under the theme

"Population and sustainable development, in particular sustained and inclusive economic growth," was adopted.

This draft resolution was formulated based on recommendations issued by many reports and conferences held by international institutions and organizations concerned with population issues. The draft resolution contained numerous recommendations through which the session demanded the importance that the member states shall work to improve the human condition on the planet, and to see the fruits of these recommendations achieved in the "State of World Population" Report for the next 56th session in 2023. In this vein, the draft resolution affirms sovereign right of each country to implement these recommendations, consistent with national laws and development priorities, with full respect for the various religious and ethical values and cultural backgrounds of its people.

In the table below, we will list the most prominent recommendations of the aforementioned draft resolution, the achievements made by the State of Qatar towards some of them, and the future measures to be taken regarding moving in the same direction.

S.	Recommendations	Recommendation's current status in Qatar	Future actions
1	Enhance the capabilities of the statistical system in Qatar	The PSA, along with other government agencies, undertakes the process of enhancing the capabilities of the statistical system in Qatar. According to Statistics Law No. (2) of 2011, the PSA is the official body responsible for the collection, production and dissemination of official statistical data. In order to enhance these capabilities, the PSA has recently developed a vision for the establishment of a central database. Currently, efforts are exerted to learn about the experiences of some developed countries in this field to build that database.	The aforementioned database will be built according to the latest international standards
2	Eradicate poverty in all its forms	Qatar has eradicated poverty in all its forms, and has contributed to improving the lives of hundreds of thousands of families around the world.	According to the reports on the performance of Qatar in achieving sustainable development indicators issued annually by the PSA, Qatar is moving forward to achieve this goal at the global level.
3	Provide social protection for the elderly	Qatar pays special attention to the care for the elderly, as it provides them with the necessary health care, financial subsidies and adequate housing through social security programs.	Both the Second National Development Strategy (2017-2022) and the Second Population Policy (2017-2022) include indicators to achieve this goal. They will also be included in the Third Population Policy (2023-2028).
4	Equitable, affordable and universal access to COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics.	The Health Sector has ably responded to Covid-19 pandemic, providing free vaccines and treatment to all citizens and residents, alike.	
5	Foster healthy ageing and strengthen the capabilities of the elderly.	The Health Sector has witnessed great progress in this area, given that the State pays special attention to the health of the elderly, whether citizens or residents.	Both the Second National Development Strategy (2017-2022) and the Second Population Policy (2017-2022) include indicators to achieve this goal. They will also be included in the Third Population Policy (2023-2028).
6	Create conditions for sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth.	In conjunction with the remarkable economic growth of the State of Qatar, the labor force participation rate reached 88.2%, which is one of the highest rates in the world, while the unemployment rate did not exceed 0.1%, which is one of the lowest rates in the world.	Both the Second National Development Strategy (2017-2022) and the Second Population Policy (2017-2022) include indicators to achieve this goal. They will also be included in the Third Population Policy (2023-2028).
7	Empower women in all spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life, and remove all persistent barriers.	The State enacted legislation that guarantees women's full exercise and enjoyment of all rights in various fields as equal actors as men. Article 2 of Law No. (25) of 2001 stipulates that: «Education shall be mandatory and free for all children (both male and female) from the beginning of the Primary stage of education to the end of the Secondary stage of education.» Currently, the number of female students at the university exceeds the number of male students. In the same vein, Qatari society has known an openness that allowed increasing women's participation in the formal and informal economy, supporting the right to participate in nomination and election, and thus increasing women's representation in the political process and public life. Further, the State has also worked to protect women and eliminate violence against them.	Both the Second National Development Strategy (2017-2022) and the Second Population Policy (2017-2022) include indicators to achieve this goal. They will also be included in the Third Population Policy (2023-2028).
8	Empower young people	In order to empower young people and enhance their participation in society, the State provides all the necessary health, educational and economic capabilities, and provides suitable job opportunities. Besides, the Ministry of Sports and Youth, which is concerned with their affairs and their sport and cultural activities, was established, securing many outlets that provide them with such services.	Both the Second National Development Strategy (2017-2022) and the Second Population Policy (2017-2022) include indicators to achieve this goal. They will also be included in the Third Population Policy (2023-2028).
9	Support for migrant workers	The State of Qatar has worked, and is still working, to improve the conditions of over 2 million expatriate workers, including their families, and provide them with a decent life by reforming labor laws. Examples of reformation include canceling exit permits for residents; allowing expatriate workers to change employment freely; setting a minimum wage, and announcing the establishment of 14 visa centers in labor-exporting countries to Qatar, in order to ensure that workers are not exploited in their countries of origin. This also includes the establishment of a fund to support and secure workers, which guarantees them care and protects their rights, as well as providing them with healthy and safe working environment.	
10	Support ICT	Qatar, represented by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, has established electronic platforms and portals in pursuit of transactions digitalization to reach the so-called smart cities. There is, for example: Hukoomi Portal, Government Services Platform and Open Data Portal	

The Permanent Population Committee holds its first post-reconstitution regular meeting on 15 June 2022



HE Dr. Saleh Al-Nabit, President of the Planning and Statistics Authority and Chairman of the Permanent Population Committee, inaugurated this meeting by extending his thanks and gratitude to the former members of the PPC for performing their duties to the fullest, which had a great impact in achieving many objectives. This was followed by a discussion of the agenda items, where His Excellency presented to PPC's members the Cabinet Resolution No. (1) of 2022 amending some provisions of Resolution No. (11) of 2009 on reorganizing the Permanent Population Committee, and Resolution of the President of the Planning and Statistics Authority No. (19) of 2022 nominating the president, vice-president and members of the Permanent Population Committee. Furthermore, the meeting reviewed the results of Phase 5 (November 2021-October 2022) of the follow-up to the implementation of Qatar's Second Population Policy (2017-2022), as well as a brief report on the participation of the PPC in the 55th Session of the ECOSOC's Population and Development Commission, which was held in New York in the last week of April 2022.

Then, the PPC's members discussed what has been implemented so far of the 2022 Work Plan of the PPC Technical Office. Also, the PPC has been informed of the work progress related to the society's opinion poll on issues of the population policy, which is being implemented online by the PPC in cooperation with the PSA.

At the end of the meeting, HE President of the Planning and Statistics Authority and Chairman of the PPC thanked the attendees, wishing them success with their new responsibilities as members of the Permanent Population Committee.

The Permanent Population Committee Organizes Training Sessions for Students of QU's Department of Sociology on 5-8 June 2022

Putting into effect the terms of the Joint Cooperation Agreement signed on 12 September 2018 between the PPC and Qatar University, the PPC organized training sessions on 5-8 June 2022 for students of the Department of Sociology at QU, which included specialized topics in population and development covering two dimensions: Firstly, a theoretical dimension that focused on some conceptual aspects of population studies and Qatar's Population Policy (2017-2022). Secondly, an applied dimension that focused on introducing the PPC (its tasks, role, vision, achievements and work methodology) and a reading in the General Population, Housing and Establishments Census 2020, in addition to practical training on comparing tables of 2010 and 2020 censuses, how to write a simplified analysis on a topic, and a training on how to convert statistical data into graphs.

The trainee students also submitted suggestions about the most appropriate social media (Twitter - Instagram...etc.) to introduce policy and demographic issues to the youth and students, and present proposals and development mechanisms for the media side.

The PSA Celebrates Family Day in Qatar

The Planning and Statistics Authority (PSA) celebrates "Family Day in Qatar," which falls on April 15 of each year, in accordance with the decision taken by the UN General Assembly in 1993. The PSA's building was lit in green to celebrate this occasion, which constitutes an

الإخوة والأخوات الأفاضل مع اقتراب
"يوم الأسرة في دولة قطر"
 الذي يتم إحيائه في 15 أبريل وتزامنه هذا العام مع
ليلة القرنفوه
 منتصف شهر رمضان المبارك
 تسعدنا مشاركتكم في الاحتفال بهاتين المناسبتين من خلال

تصويركم لمقطع فيديو عفوي قصير
 للأطفال يتحدثون عن الأسرة وجنهم
 لوالديهم وإخوتهم والعائلة

صوت واضح بالعربية
 العاقية أو الإنكليزية

المدة
 دقيقة

تصوير أفقي وبدون
 استخدام فلاشر بصرية

إرسال الفيديو مع ذكر اسم الطفل إلى واتساب جهاز التخطيط
 والإحصاء على الرقم 66722063 في موعد أقصاه الجمعة 15 أبريل
 وسيتم جمع الفيديوهات المرسلة في مقطع واحد يُنشر على
 منصات التواصل الاجتماعي

وكل عام وأنتم بخير

www.psa.gov.qa | 03 461 1234 | 03 461 1234

opportunity to emphasize the importance of family cohesion as the basic nucleus in building societies and civilizations.

The idea of celebrating Family Day in Qatar came out on the sidelines of the International Conference on the Family hosted by the State of Qatar in 2004 on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the International Year of the Family. At the conclusion of the conference, HH Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation, called for the importance of celebrating Family Day. At the time, the Supreme Council for Family Affairs proposed April 15 of each year to celebrate this day, and submitted its proposal in this regard to the Council of Ministers, which approved the pioneering idea in 2011 that Family Day in Qatar shall be the 15th of April every year.

The Permanent Constitution of the State of Qatar, in Article 21, stipulates the importance of the family as the basis of society and a Qatari family is founded on religion, ethics and patriotism. In turn, the laws and decisions inspired by the constitution stipulated mechanisms and ways to regulate the means to protect the family, support its structure, strengthen its bonds, and protect mothers, children and the elderly. Celebrating the Family Day in Qatar is an opportunity to raise awareness of the role of the family in Qatari society, and to increase knowledge of the social, cultural and demographic factors affecting it. This is exactly what the PSA does by presenting the results of population surveys and censuses, and providing many statistical topics; such as the results of the household survey, vital statistics (such as marriage and divorce), women and men statistics, and the indicators it provides as milestones to achieve the near and long-term goals of improving social and economic conditions for families and individuals in society alike.

In order to contribute to monitoring the reality of the Qatari family and its various conditions in terms of size, patterns of construction, forms of interrelationships between its elements, and their living conditions, as well as the challenges it faces, the PSA, in partnership with multiple

ministries and institutions, provides important statistical topics of wide interest in the fields of population and social studies.

The Qatari Family knows a set of changes resulting from the profound social and economic transformations that the Qatari society is witnessing. To contribute to monitoring its reality and its different conditions in terms of size, construction patterns, forms of mutual relations between its elements and living conditions, as well as the challenges it faces, the Planning and Statistics Authority provides important statistical topics related to the family. These are topics of interest in the fields of population and social studies, and the data contained in the bulletin issued by the Planning and Family Authority are the result of cooperation between the Planning and Statistics Authority and the Supreme Judicial Council according to the variables agreed upon and published in the appendices. The Planning and Statistics Authority also issues reports and studies of interest to the family, for example:

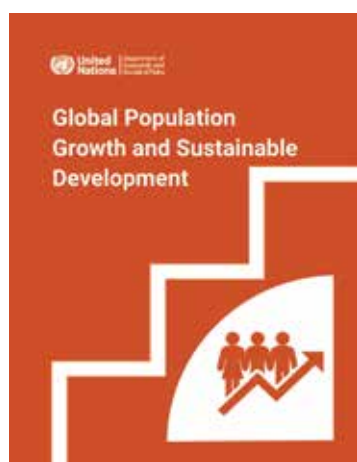
- **Marriage and Divorce:** a report which aims at identifying the evolution of cases of marriage and divorce in the State of Qatar. Data is divided into two parts: the first section includes data and indicators such as the average age at first marriage, the general marriage rate, data on the characteristics of marriage in Qatari society through indicators of first marriage, age groups of spouses and their level of education. As for the second section, it focuses on the issue of divorce in the Qatari society and contains data on divorce, such as the general divorce rate per 1,000 of the population, and divorce certificates according to the type of divorce (revocable, minor divorce, divorce, major divorce) and according to the age group of the husband and wife, as well as according to the duration of marital life. The relationship of kinship, as well as certificates of divorce by age group.
- **Women and Men in the State of Qatar** (statistical picture). The statistics of women and men were suggested according to the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, which is the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations. This Periodic report every two years to monitor changes in the aforementioned areas, where data is obtained from various sources such as records, surveys and censuses. It is the result of cooperation between the Planning and Statistics Authority and the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labor and Social Affairs. Since 2004, the agency has issued a report related to gender statistics: "Women and Men in the State of Qatar (a statistical picture)", which is the result of cooperation between the Supreme Council for Family Affairs and the Planning and Statistics Authority. Research and media
- **Household income and Expenditure:** This report is based on sample survey data on living conditions and monthly household expenditure and income. It was conducted in the State of in order to measure the impression of the respondents in all seasons of the year. The report aims to monitor the standard of living and well-being, to measure the efficiency of government contributions to the living conditions of individuals, the extent of individuals' determination to change for the better in terms of well-being and living conditions, and to measure the individual's subjective status in relation to living conditions. The Planning and Statistics Authority also issues, periodically every two years, a series of social statistics that have many connections to the family with, and that show changes in social aspects over a period of ten years, such as population, housing, health, education, culture, empowerment of women, and others, based on main sources of data and various indicators, including records Administrative bodies related to surveys and censuses..

Studies and Research



Prepared by Dr. Mostafa Kharoufi,
the Permanent Population Committee

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division: Global Population Growth and Sustainable Development, New York, 2021



The present report, *Global Population Growth and Sustainable Development*, examines the linkages between global population growth and the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Since the middle of the twentieth century, world population has more than tripled in size, rising from around 2.5 billion in 1950 to almost 7.9 billion in 2021. Projections by the United Nations suggest that the size of the global population could grow to almost 11 billion by the end of the twenty-first century, when it is expected to stabilize.

The unprecedented growth of the global population that has occurred since 1950 is the result of two trends: on the one hand, the gradual increase in average human longevity due to widespread improvements in public health, nutrition, personal hygiene and medicine, and on the other hand, the persistence of high levels of fertility in many countries.

However, the pace of world population growth has slowed considerably since around 1970, as fertility levels have fallen in varying degrees throughout the world. Today, there is substantial variation in levels of mortality and fertility and in rates of population growth across countries and regions. Countries span a wide demographic continuum, as fertility declines to very weak levels in many developed countries, especially Western Europe and Japan, while there are continuing high levels of

fertility that drive the rapid growth of populations in many low-income countries, which affects progress in development.

The total population of low-income countries is projected to nearly double in size between 2020 and 2050. In this context, sustained rapid population growth adds to the challenges of achieving social and economic development and magnifies the scale of the investments and effort required to ensure that no one is left behind. Rapid population growth makes it more difficult for low-income countries to afford the increase in public expenditures that is needed to eradicate poverty, end hunger and malnutrition, and ensure universal access to health care, education and other essential services.

Furthermore, high fertility and rapid population growth are often linked to a lack of autonomy and opportunity among women and girls. Therefore, achieving the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially targets related to reproductive health, education and gender equality, requires empowering individuals to make choices that are likely to contribute to a reduction in the pace of global population growth. Today, millions of people around the globe, mostly in low-income, lack access to the information and services needed to determine whether and when to have children. In this situation, women and girls are often unable to exercise their full range of rights, including reproductive rights, resulting in high levels of childbearing over the life course and increasing the probability of poor outcomes for both mothers and their children.

In this vein, countries where the population is still growing rapidly tend also to have high levels of poverty and hunger and to face other serious challenges affecting their progress in development. Because of their delayed social and economic development, these countries are poorly equipped to mitigate or adapt to environmental threats to end poverty and hunger, achieve the SDGs related to health, education and access to decent work.

Thus, the economies of low-income countries need to grow much more rapidly than their populations, requiring greatly expanded investments in infrastructure as well as increased access to affordable energy and modern technology in all sectors. Wealthy countries and the international community can help to ensure that these countries receive the necessary technical and financial assistance so that their economies can grow using technologies that will minimize future greenhouse gas emissions.

Having accurate estimates of population trends and reliable forecasts of future changes, including for the size of populations and their distributions by age, sex and geographical location, is required for policy formulation and implementation and as a guide to assist countries in following a path towards sustainable development. However, there are still many gaps in the available data. Consequently, demographic data are an essential public good and are most useful if freely available to all.

Planning and Statistics Authority - Annual Bulletin of Vital Statistics - Births and Deaths 2020



This data is the fruit of cooperation between the Planning and Statistics Authority and the Ministry of Public Health in accordance with the agreed-upon forms in accordance with Law No. (5) of 1982 regarding the registration of births and deaths. The bulletin provides a set of definitions, indicators and vital rates. It also includes five chapters as follows:

- Vital indicators
- Live births
- Deaths
- Infant mortality
- Registered deaths by cause of death

Regarding vital indicators and rates, this bulletin presents the Crude Birth Rate (CBR), the General Fertility Rate (GFR), the Age-Specific Fertility Rate (ASFR), the Total Fertility Rate (TFR), the Gross Reproduction Rate (GRR), the average age of mothers at childbearing, the Crude Death Rate (CDR), the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), the neonatal mortality rate, and the Post-neonatal mortality rate, maternal mortality during pregnancy and delivery.

Planning and Statistics Authority - General Population, Housing and Establishments Census 2020



This report presents the detailed results of the General Population, Housing and Establishments Census in order to meet the needs of ministries, authorities, planners, decision makers, researchers and scholars to serve comprehensive development plans intended to achieve Qatar Vision 2030.

The census is an all-inclusive statistical process at a specified moment, and the census statistics form a key base for population, and housing, and establishment data. Census 2020 is the sixth in a series of population censuses in the State of Qatar, as state-of-the-art technology was used in its implementation at all stages, and its results were released in record time.

The significance of the census data is highlighted in the following areas:

- Development Plans: They serve as a basis for all planning levels related to population, housing and establishments
- The assessment of the availability of basic services for families, to identify areas in need of such services and to prioritize plans.
- It is the main source of information related to the size of labor force and its characteristics, as well aspects of education and training, current and projected levels of population, and national policies in this area.
- It provides an integrated framework for the families of the community, since sampling allows to conduct specialized field research.

This census was the first census to use of administrative records of the country's official data source, in addition to modern technologies, whereby handheld computers, the Internet and the census call center were used to collect, enter and edit data, which contributed to speeding up the announcement of the results in record time.

This census was conducted in the same year scheduled for it, as the actual start of population count took place in December 2020, later than the scheduled date in March 2020, due to the circumstances imposed by preventive and precautionary measures to limit infection and the spread of Covid-19.

The Census general concepts were presented through the relevant UN definitions, the characteristics of censuses and the use of data of population census, building census, and establishment census.

The methodology of implementing the Census 2020 relied entirely on the administrative records of the country's various government agencies, which represent the data source of census, while providing the missing data through field operations. To ensure the success of this methodology, several evaluations were conducted to determine the validity of the available administrative records for use in the census stages, in addition to conducting testing and technical analysis programs for the electronic systems of information systems and electronic linkage with data sources.

Planning and Statistics Authority – Marriage and Divorce in the State of Qatar, 2020.



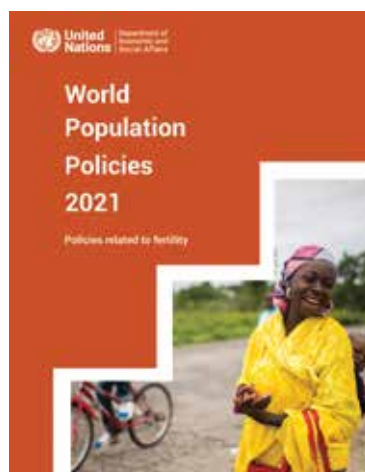
This report shows the development of marriage and divorce and their various components, such as marriage and divorce rates and average age at first marriage, as well as the characteristics of marriage and divorce in 2020, in a bid to identify the factors that delay or encourage marriage and those that impact divorce rates as well as their repercussions on family cohesion.

Moreover, Marriage & Divorce statistics are one of the cornerstones of vital statistics that are used as a significant element when making decisions and setting policies that promote family cohesion. Indicators derived from these data reveal all the aspects surrounding marriage and divorce which have gained great attention in the field of population and social studies.

The first section of this report deals with marriage and its data and indicators, such as the average age at first marriage and general marriage rate. It also includes data on marriage characteristics in the Qatari society through indicators of first marriage, age groups and educational levels of spouses.

The second section of this report focuses on divorce in the Qatari society. It comprises analysis of data on divorce, such as general divorce rate per 1,000 population, divorce certificates by type of divorce (revocable divorce, minor irrevocable divorce, Divorce against compensation "Khula" and major irrevocable divorce), spouse's age group, duration of marriage and kinship, in addition to divorce certificates by age groups.

Planning and Statistics Authority – Qatar Social Statistics (2011-2020)



It is the fifth report in a series of comprehensive social statistics, which summarizes the path of social statistical development for the State of Qatar between 2011-2020. In this report, the PSA endeavors to highlight the most frequently used indicators in the planning and implementation processes.

The report provides statistical data and indicators of interest to the population; such as population annual growth rate; the reasons for the changes experienced by the State of Qatar, the working-age population and their distribution by municipalities; preventive and curative health services provided by the state to citizens and residents; birth and death rates; and the Gross Reproduction Rate (GRR); average age of mothers at childbearing; crude marriage rates and crude divorce rates.

As for the education sector, the statistics show a significant positive decrease in the illiteracy rate, an increase in the number of pupils and students in the educational stages (kindergarten to university), and the remarkable development in higher education in parallel with the establishment of several international universities that provide many specializations in different fields, and the increase in the number of students awarded overseas scholarships, and the increase the trainees in government centers and institutes.

The report shows the significant increase in the economically active population through discussing male and female participation rates in all handicrafts, and the unemployment rate for both sexes, sources of

income and expenditure, and the number of beneficiaries from social security, as well as data of interest to the sectors of tourism, media and culture.

With regard to sports, the report shows an increase in the number of sports facilities, as the number reached 291 in 2019-2020, 31% of which were football stadiums. The number of sports activities of the sports federations increased from 26 to 37 activities for the period 2010-2020. Moreover, football accounted for the largest share of players for the same year. The State of Qatar has organized many local competitions, which in turn contribute to enhancing physical fitness, as the number of local competitions increased from 583 in 2013/2014 to 768 tournaments in 2019/2020. The junior U18 tournaments formed the highest percentage (31%) of the total local championships, followed by Adults 24%, then Kids 18% and Junior U16 14%.

Finally, with regard to the environment, the report shows a decrease in the consumption of ozone-depleting substances, as indicators show that the country is committed to phase out the consumption of CFCs and replace them with other substances that have the potential of reducing ozone depletion. Additionally, seawater desalination index also shows a significant increase in water production between 2011 and 2020, along with a rise in wastewater recycling and treatment capacity in urban areas.

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division: World Population Policies 2021: Policies related to fertility



The report provides a brief overview of global fertility levels and trends since the early 1960s and explores government views and policies related to fertility. The analysis of views and policies draws on data gathered through 2019 and available in the World Population Policies Database, reflecting the situation before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The report then presents five case studies of countries from different regions and with a range of fertility levels, exploring in more detail the origins and evolution of national fertility policies. The case studies are followed by an assessment of known or potential direct and indirect impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on fertility patterns and trends. The report concludes with an exploration of policy options that governments may wish to consider in the current context. Below are some key conclusions of the report:

- Globally, through 2019, nearly three quarters of governments had policies related to fertility. Of these, 69 governments had policies to lower fertility, 55 aimed to raise fertility, and 19 focused on

maintaining current levels of fertility. A total of 54 governments did not have an official fertility policy.

- The data suggest an association between the kinds of policies in place between 2015 and 2019 and fertility levels observed in that period. Among the 69 countries with policies to lower fertility, 10 were high-fertility countries in 2019, and 50 had intermediate fertility levels. Of the 55 countries with policies to raise fertility, 40 had low levels of fertility in 2019, including 18 with very low levels.
- In developed countries with older populations, governments were more likely to have policies intended to raise fertility. Among developing countries, nearly half had policies to lower fertility, while one quarter did not have an official policy related to fertility. Among the least developed countries (LDCs), whose combined population continues to grow rapidly, an increasing number of governments had policies seeking to lower fertility.
- An overwhelming majority of governments (over 95 per cent, or 98 of 103 countries with available data in 2019) provided family planning services to their populations, either directly through public programmes or indirectly through non-governmental organizations. Direct support was provided by 80 governments, of which 68 reported supporting family planning both directly and indirectly. In addition, 18 governments provided only indirect support.
- Among the 102 countries with available data in 2019, 88 governments considered the fertility of adolescents to be a matter of concern. This was true for almost all of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa or in Latin America and the Caribbean that had adolescent fertility rates higher than 50 births per 1,000 women aged 15-19 years. Regardless of their specific views on adolescent fertility, the majority of governments adopted measures to improve the sexual and reproductive health of adolescents by providing school-based sexuality education and by raising rates of secondary school enrolment and retention among girls and young women.
- The country case studies illustrate the link between fertility policies adopted by governments and the fertility patterns and trends prevailing in their countries. Kenya, which had high levels of fertility as recently as 2000-2005, became the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to adopt a national family planning programme, contributing to a reduction in the country's fertility level from 8.1 births per woman in 1965-1970 to 3.5 in 2015-2020. In Argentina, a country where low levels of total lifetime fertility have been accompanied by high levels of adolescent fertility, government policies have focused specifically on lowering the adolescent birth rate.
- In Hungary, the Government has expressed concern about persistent low levels of fertility and has adopted a range of policies that explicitly encourage childbirth. By contrast, Australia does not have an official policy to raise the fertility level but has adopted a range of family policies that support childbearing and childrearing. China, after implementing a strict one-child policy for three decades, has in recent years changed course in response to persistent low fertility and rapid population ageing; it now allows all couples to have three children.
- The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting economic and social changes have affected fertility levels in many countries, but this impact may be short-lived. Based on both historical experience and available evidence about recent changes, it is expected that fertility fluctuations from 2021 to 2023 will be relatively minor and that fertility may return to pre-pandemic levels by around 2025.

United Nations (ESCWA) - COVID-19 Pandemic in the Arab Region – Beirut, 2022

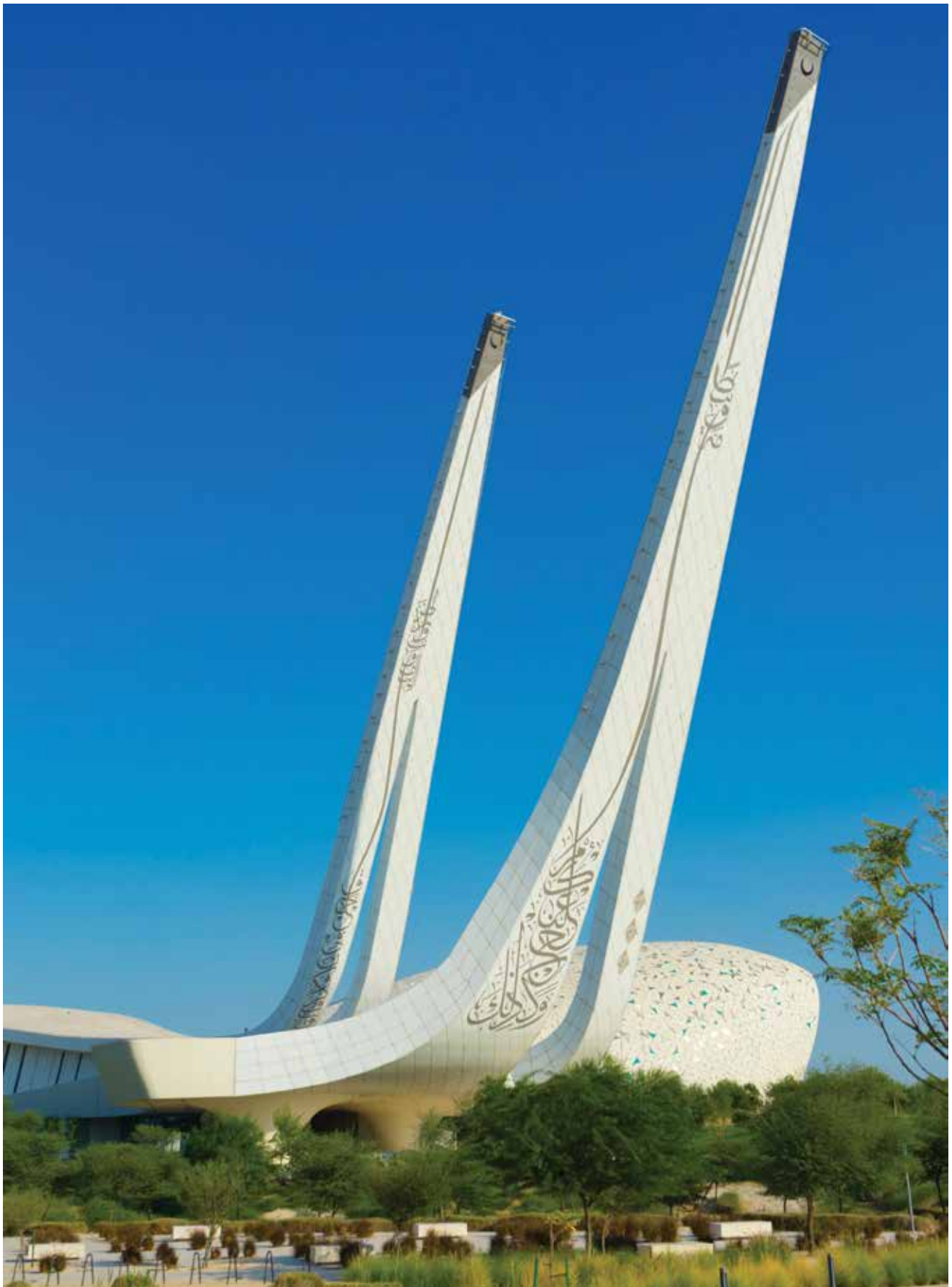


The level of spending on COVID-19 in the Arab region varied from one group of countries to another, but generally remained lower than global spending. In the Arab region, 3.9 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) was spent on COVID-19 compared to a global average of 22.6 per cent. The wealthier member countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) spent the most, namely \$699 billion. Sources of spending also differed from one country to the other. In Tunisia and Morocco, the private sector provided funds worth \$410 million and \$104.5 million, respectively. While most Arab countries reprioritized their national spending or created special funds, conflict-stricken countries relied mainly on humanitarian aid and donor funding.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, social protection systems in the Arab region were weak, fragmented, non-inclusive, non-transparent and unsustainable. Underinvestment in these systems and exclusion of vulnerable populations were key challenges. Less than 30 percent of the population in the Arab region were covered by social protection programmes.

Moreover, most social protection systems were funded through Government budgets or external assistance and not through contributions from beneficiaries or employers. The COVID-19 crisis spotlighted the problems of the social contract between people and Governments and presented a historic opportunity to address some of the challenges facing social protection systems.

In addition, spending on COVID-19 went towards different areas, including social assistance (cash transfer, school feeding and others), loan and tax benefits (tax exemption, interest rate waiver and others), social insurance unemployment waiver, sick leave pensions and others, labour markets (wage subsidies, paid leave and work from home), health-related support (free vaccines, testing, healthcare systems, and others), financial policy support (soft loan and credit support, tax exemption and others) and general policy support (creation of funds, digital solutions and others). In this context, the Arab region, in general, allocated 18 percent of fiscal support for social protection. Oil-importing countries focused spending on health and targeted social transfers, while oil-exporting countries prioritized temporary tax reductions, extended payment deadlines and increased other spending such as partial salary payments to preserve jobs.



Education City Mosque

offers various religious and educational programs in a building with futuristic architecture inspired by Islamic art.