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# **Is fertility stalling in Jordan?**

By [Valeria Cetorelli](#), [Tiziana Leone](#)

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## Abstract

**Background:** Most of the recent literature on fertility stalls has concentrated on sub-Saharan Africa and has highlighted flaws in DHS data. No similar detailed research exists for presumed stalls occurring in countries outside that region. This is particularly surprising when considering that cases of fertility stalls have also been suggested in Middle Eastern countries, including in Egypt, Syria and among the Palestinians in Israel and the occupied Territory.

**Objective:** The present paper is the first to study an apparent fertility stall in Jordan, using five DHS surveys, and to carry out a rigorous three-stage analysis to assess its genuineness.

**Methods:** First, the quality of data concerning age and birth dates of women and their children is evaluated to control for possible misreporting. Second, retrospective fertility rates are calculated from each survey and a reliable fertility trend covering over 30 years is reconstructed from pooled data of all surveys. Finally, a linear regression model is fitted to assess whether the rate of fertility decline in the stalling period differs significantly from the rate of decline in the preceding period and is not statistically different from zero.

**Results:** The analysis demonstrates that not only is the stall real and not due to data errors, but it is also one of the longest lasting recently assessed. Since more than a decade, fertility in Jordan has remained relatively constant at a rate exceeding 3.5 children per woman.

**Conclusions:** This has important policy implications. It suggests the need for greater attention to possible cases of similar stalls in neighbouring countries and in-depth investigations of their determinants.

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