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## Slovenia: Generous family policy without evidence of any fertility impact

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### Abstract

Slovenia was not a typical socialist country; the transformation that had started at the end of the 1980s did not cause such great turbulences as in other countries in transition. However, unfavorable consequences did accompany the transition, particularly for some segments of the population. Fertility trends in Slovenia, as seen in the total fertility rate, have not surpassed the replacement level since the end of the 1970s. The lowest level of 1.21 was reached during the 1999-2003 period. Since then, the total fertility rate has been increasing slightly. Postponement in childbearing began with cohorts born after 1960. In today's Slovenian society, on average young women achieve higher education than men, and they perceive (potential) motherhood as a drawback in the labor market. Almost all parents in Slovenia are employed full-time, even those with small children. Nevertheless, the traditional gender-division of roles persists in the family. Extended education, relatively high unemployment among the young, and a shortage of adequate housing prolong the stay in the parental home. Together with insecure employment, a responsible parenthood norm, and the perceived high costs of children, this results in childbearing postponement and a lower final number of children. Slovenia has a relatively well-developed family policy, particularly on parental leave and pre-school childcare. Notwithstanding, almost no impact of family policy on fertility has ever been observed.

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