

Topic: Demographic control, yes or no?

Today 7, then maybe 9 or in a few decades 11 billion people. The demographic growth seems unstoppable. However, the planet has undeniable limited resources, how will it be possible to guarantee a dignified life to the whole population? Some countries have long since introduced strict mechanisms for birth control, but birth control raises complex ethical and political concerns: what about freedom of choice? Doesn't a birth control policy risk worsening social inequalities instead of reducing them?

**Argument PRO:** "Developing countries must adopt strict birth control policies".

**Argument AGAINST:** "Developing countries should not adopt strict birth control policies".

**Current situation, scenario, and context.**

The United Nations estimates that in 2050 the world population will reach 9.8 billion. Above all, such results are determined by the demographic growth of some countries, suffice it to say that at the moment China and India account for 1.4 and 1.3 billion inhabitants respectively. A larger population can only have a massive impact on the environment due, on the one hand, to a greater exploitation of resources and, on the other, to the release of quantities of waste products from human activities. In 2019, the journal BioScience published a letter signed by over 11,000 scientists from around the world calling for "the gradual reduction of the world's population" as a response to the climate emergency. Is it fair to decide that in order to avoid an overpopulated planet, developing countries should adopt a policy of birth control or rather, given that population growth cannot be unlimited, should we confide in the fact that improving economic conditions will also decrease the number of children per woman? Perhaps, everyone would be worse off in an overpopulated world, but should we go as far as to control people's choices?

**Arguments pro:**

- Aside from the benefits accruing to humanity from a greater spread of birth control policies, the economy of the poorest countries would also benefit because it would be easier to ensure access to essential services (education, health) for all.
- It will be impossible to feed a growing population while reducing emissions, hence in addition to better resource management we have no alternative to birth control.

**Arguments against:**

- Democratic countries are generally not in favor of birth control policies as they limit the freedom of the individual and encourage other forms of limitation of human rights.
- Many religious leaders are opposed to birth control, reflecting the fact that it is human nature not to set any limits to life.

**Further insights:**

- ONU: [World Population Prospects 2019](#)
- European Commission: [Climate change: demographics matter](#)
- NATO: [Population growth: the defining challenge of the 21st Century](#)
- BBC: [Population control: Is it a tool of the rich?](#)
- [Population Research institute](#)