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Level 2 – 12th June 2025

U.N. issues report on global birth rate crisis

FREE online quizzes, mp3 listening and more for this lesson here:

<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2506/250612-global-birth-rates-crisis-2.html>

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Please try Levels 0, 1 and 3. They are (a little) harder.

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THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2506/250612-global-birth-rates-crisis-2.html>

The United Nations (U.N.) has said the world is having a birth rate crisis. The U.N. has released a report called "State of World Population 2025". It highlights how fewer babies are being born worldwide. At the same time, people are living longer. Falling birth rates and more older people are creating problems. Smaller numbers of workers have to pay the pensions of older people. The U.N. said: "Many countries are [struggling] with ageing and shrinking populations, labour shortages, and rising healthcare and pension costs. These are real concerns."

The U.N. asked more than 14,000 people in 14 countries on five continents for its report. A key finding was the global fertility crisis. The high cost of having children is the biggest reason for not having children. Many couples want children, but cannot afford them. One in five adults think they will not be able to have the number of children they want. Other reasons for falling birth rates include low salaries, expensive housing, and worries about the future of our world. One solution to this crisis is "family-friendly" policies, like cheaper childcare and paid leave for all carers.

Sources: <https://news.sky.com/story/global-birth-rates-crisis-people-do-still-want-to-have-children-but-many-cant-heres-why-13381290>
<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2025/jun/10/un-population-fund-unfpa-report-reasons-falling-global-fertility>
<https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/swp25-highlights-%5Beng%5D-v250530-web.pdf>

PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2506/250612-global-birth-rates-crisis-2.html>

PARAGRAPH ONE:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. the world is having a | a. are living longer |
| 2. fewer babies are being | b. pension costs |
| 3. At the same time, people | c. of older people |
| 4. Smaller numbers | d. born |
| 5. pay the pensions | e. concerns |
| 6. Many countries are | f. of workers |
| 7. rising healthcare and | g. birth rate crisis |
| 8. These are real | h. struggling |

PARAGRAPH TWO:

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. 14 countries | a. childcare |
| 2. the global | b. for falling birth rates |
| 3. The high cost | c. fertility crisis |
| 4. One in | d. all carers |
| 5. Other reasons | e. on five continents |
| 6. One solution | f. five adults |
| 7. cheaper | g. to this crisis |
| 8. paid leave for | h. of having children |

LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2506/250612-global-birth-rates-crisis-2.html>

The United Nations (U.N.) has said the (1) _____ a birth rate crisis. The U.N. has released (2) _____ "State of World Population 2025". It highlights how fewer babies are being born worldwide. At the same time, people (3) _____. Falling birth rates and more older people are creating problems. Smaller numbers of workers have to (4) _____ of older people. The U.N. said: "Many countries (5) _____ ageing and shrinking populations, labour shortages, and rising healthcare and pension costs. These (6) _____."

The U.N. (7) _____ 14,000 people in 14 countries on five continents for its report. A key finding was the global fertility crisis. The (8) _____ having children is the biggest reason for not having children. Many couples want children, but (9) _____. One in five adults think they will not be able to have the number of children they want. Other (10) _____ birth rates include low salaries, expensive housing (11) _____ the future of our world. One solution to this crisis is "family-friendly" policies, like cheaper childcare and (12) _____ all carers.

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2506/250612-global-birth-rates-crisis-2.html>

TheUnitedNations(U.N.)hassaidtheworldishavingabirthratecrisis.TheU.N.hasreleasedareportcalled"StateofWorldPopulation2025".Ithighlightshowfewerbabiesarebeingbornworldwide.Atthesametime,peoplearelivinglonger.Fallingbirthratesandmoreolderpeoplearecreatingproblems.Smaller numbers of workershavetopaythepensionsofold people.TheU.N.said:"Manycountriesare[struggling]withageingandshrinkingpopulations,labourshortages,andrisinghealthcareandpensioncosts.Theseare real concerns."TheU.N.askedmorethan14,000peoplein14countriesonfivecontinentsforitsreport.Akeyfindingwastheglobalfertilitycrisis.Thehighcostofhavingchildrenisthebiggestreasonfor not having children.Manycoupleswantchildren,butcannotaffordthem.Oneinfiveadultsthinktheywillnotbeabletohavethenumberofchildrentheywant.Otherreasonsforfallingbirthratesincludelowsalaries,expensivehousing,andworriesaboutthefutureofourworld.Onesolutiontothiscrisisis"family-friendly"policies,likecheaperchildcareandpaidleaveforallcarers.

BABIES SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2506/250612-global-birth-rates-crisis-2.html>

Write five GOOD questions about babies in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.
When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____
- e) _____
- f) _____

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WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____
- e) _____
- f) _____

WRITING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2016/250612-global-birth-rates-crisis-2.html>

Write about **babies** for 10 minutes. Read and talk about your partner's paper.

[illegible]