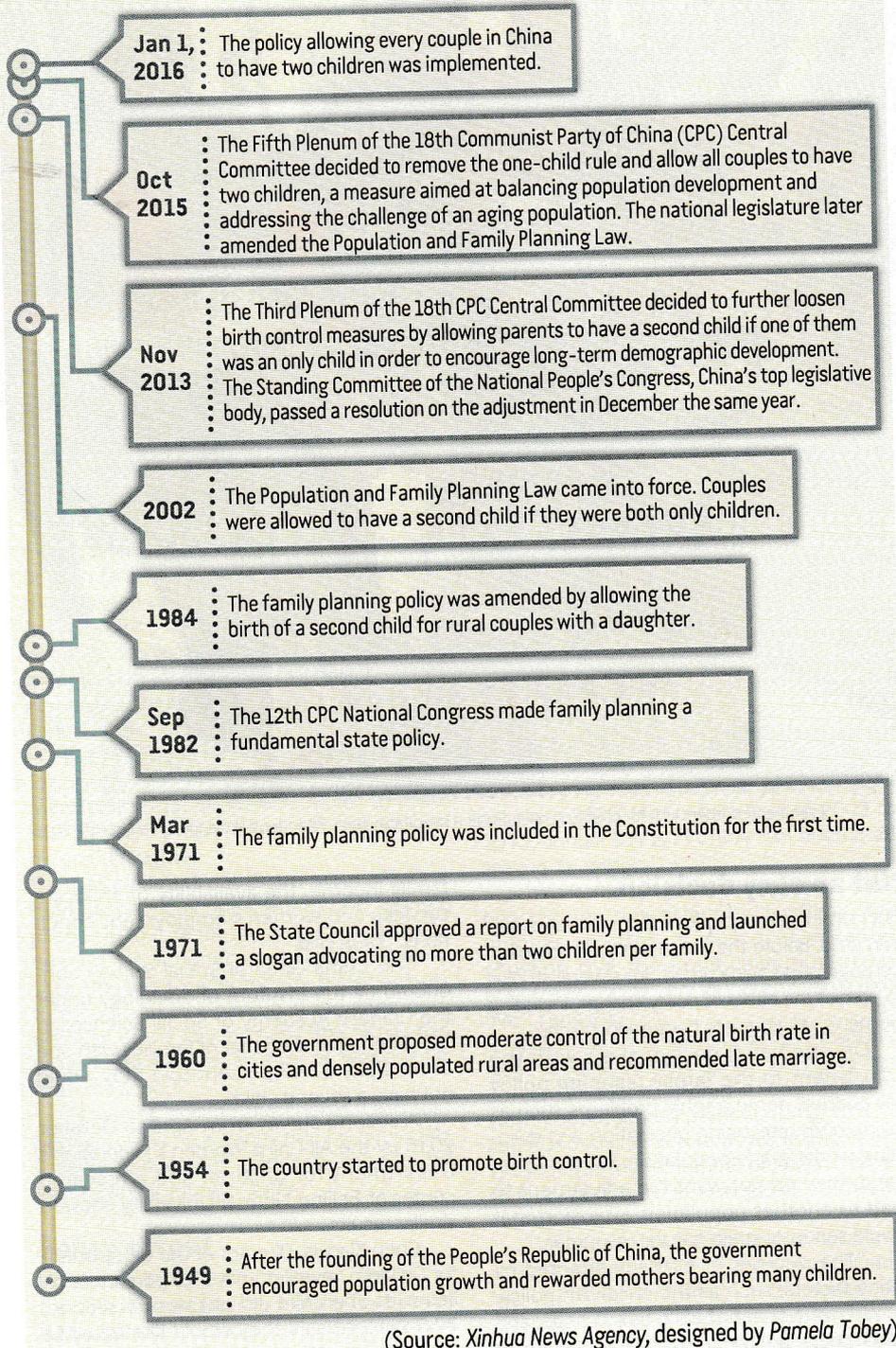


## China's Family Planning Policy



(Source: Xinhua News Agency, designed by Pamela Tobey)

worried about the availability and affordability of public services such as education and medical services, as well as family and environmental conditions. These were the major factors preventing families from having a second child.

Yang said some studies show that child-rearing cost accounts for nearly half the average income of Chinese families, with education expenses being a major burden.

On the other hand, the survey administered by the All-China Women's Federation also showed that 29.6 percent of ordinary urban families already had a second child, and in rural areas, the percentage was higher.

Families already with two children and one-child families wishing to have a second child said the major reasons for the second child were "family happiness," "to have a companion for the first child" and "to have both a son and a daughter."

Some couples eligible for a second child may be too old. Approximately 40 percent of married women in China who are of child-bearing age and have one child are older than 40, said Wang Guangzhou, a researcher with the Institute of Population and Labor Economics under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

### Follow-up action

In the following four years, the NHFPC will strengthen monitoring the birth population, and continue to track and evaluate the effect of the universal two-child policy, according to the Development Plan for National Family Planning Work During the 13th Five-Year Plan Period released on January 25.

The plan predicts that by 2020, China's population will be around 1.42 billion; the annual natural population growth rate will be about 0.6 percent, the total fertility rate will increase to around 1.8 and the male-to-female ratio at birth will fall below 112:100.

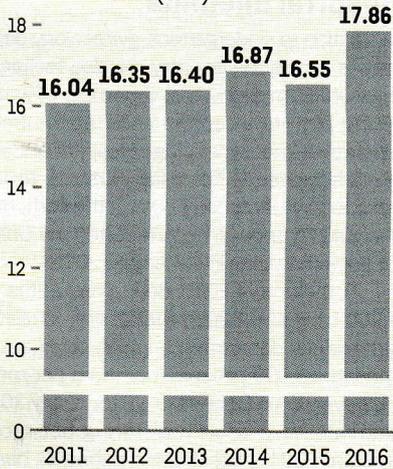
From 2010 to 2015, China's annual natural population growth rate stayed around 0.5 percent and the male-to-female ratio at birth dropped from 117.94:100 to 113.51:100. In 2016, the total fertility rate was above 1.7, according to the NHFPC.

In the next four years, the NHFPC's priority is implementing the universal two-child policy effectively. It has said it will safeguard public rights and interests such as maternity leave, and work with other government

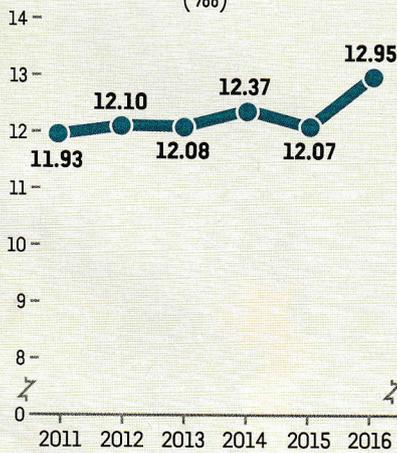
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## China's Births and Birth Rate

### Number of Births (mln)



### Birth Rate (‰)

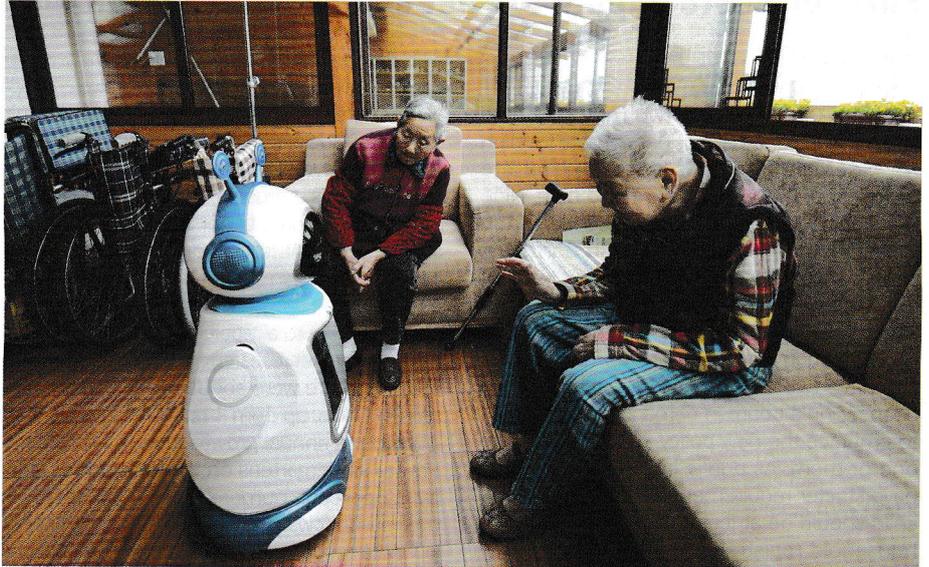


(Source: National Bureau of Statistics, designed by Pamela Tobey)

departments to meet the increasing public need for medical, educational and related services. In addition, it will also promote gender equality to address the abnormal gender ratio at birth. ■

Copyedited by Sudeshna Sarkar  
Comments to [wanghairong@bjreview.com](mailto:wanghairong@bjreview.com)

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A robot interacts with two senior citizens in a nursing home in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, on May 24, 2016. The robot can provide various services and also double up as a mobile TV



Job seekers engage with potential employers at a job fair in Kunming, Yunnan Province, on February 7