

Zeitschrift: Schweizer Monatshefte : Zeitschrift für Politik, Wirtschaft, Kultur
Herausgeber: Gesellschaft Schweizer Monatshefte
Band: 78 (1998)
Heft: 11

Sonstiges

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 14.04.2026

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

cians and national and international civil servants should decide how many children people may have.

Advocates of officially sponsored population policies often argue that they do not propose compulsion but intend only to extend the options of people by assisting the spread of knowledge about contraceptive methods. But people in LDCs usually know about both traditional and more modern methods of birth control. Moreover, in many Third World countries, especially in Asia and Africa, official information, advice, and persuasion in practice often shade into coercion. In most of these societies, people are more subject to authority than in the West. And especially in recent years, the incomes and prospects of many people have come to depend heavily on official favors. In India, for example, promotion in the civil service, allocation of driving and vehicle licenses, and access to subsidized credit, official housing, and other facilities have all been linked at times to restriction of family size. Forcible, mass sterilization, which took place in India in the 1970s, and the extensive coercion in the People's Republic of China are only extreme cases in a spectrum of measures extending from publicity to compulsion.

Policies and measures pressing people to have fewer children can provoke acute anxiety and conflict, and they raise serious moral and political problems. Implementation of such policies may leave people dejected and inert, uninterested in social and economic advance or incapable of

.....
*It is widely
 agreed that
 the West
 should not
 impose its
 standards,
 mores, and
 attitudes on
 Third World
 governments
 and peoples.*

achieving it. Such outcomes have often been observed when people have been forced to change their mores and conduct. It is widely agreed that the West should not impose its standards, mores, and attitudes on Third World governments and peoples. Yet, ironically, the most influential voices call for the exact opposite with regard to population control.

There is one type of official policy that would tend to reduce population growth, extend the range of personal choice, and promote attitudes and mores that foster economic advance and improvement of the well-being of the population. That policy is the promotion of external commercial contacts, especially contacts with the West, by the people of LDCs. Such contacts have been powerful agents of voluntary change in attitudes and habits, particularly by eroding those harmful to economic improvement. Throughout the less developed world, the most prosperous groups and areas are those with the most external commercial contacts. And such contacts also encourage voluntary reduction of family size. Thus, extension of such contacts and the widening of people's range of choice promote both economic advance and reduction in fertility. In these circumstances, a reduction of family size is achieved without the damaging effects of placing official pressure on people with regard to their most private and vital concerns. Yet policies of this kind are not on the agenda of those who advocate reducing population growth in LDCs. ♦

Mitteilung an unsere Abonnenten

Die allgemeine Kostenentwicklung macht es leider unumgänglich, den Abonnementspreis der Schweizer Monatshefte zu erhöhen. Das Jahresabonnement kostet ab Januar 1999 Fr. 100.–, Studentenabonnement Fr. 50.–; Auslandabonnement zuzüglich Fr. 21.– Portokosten; Einzelnummer Fr. 10.–.