

Be fruitful and multiply

Association of China's universal two child policy with birth rates

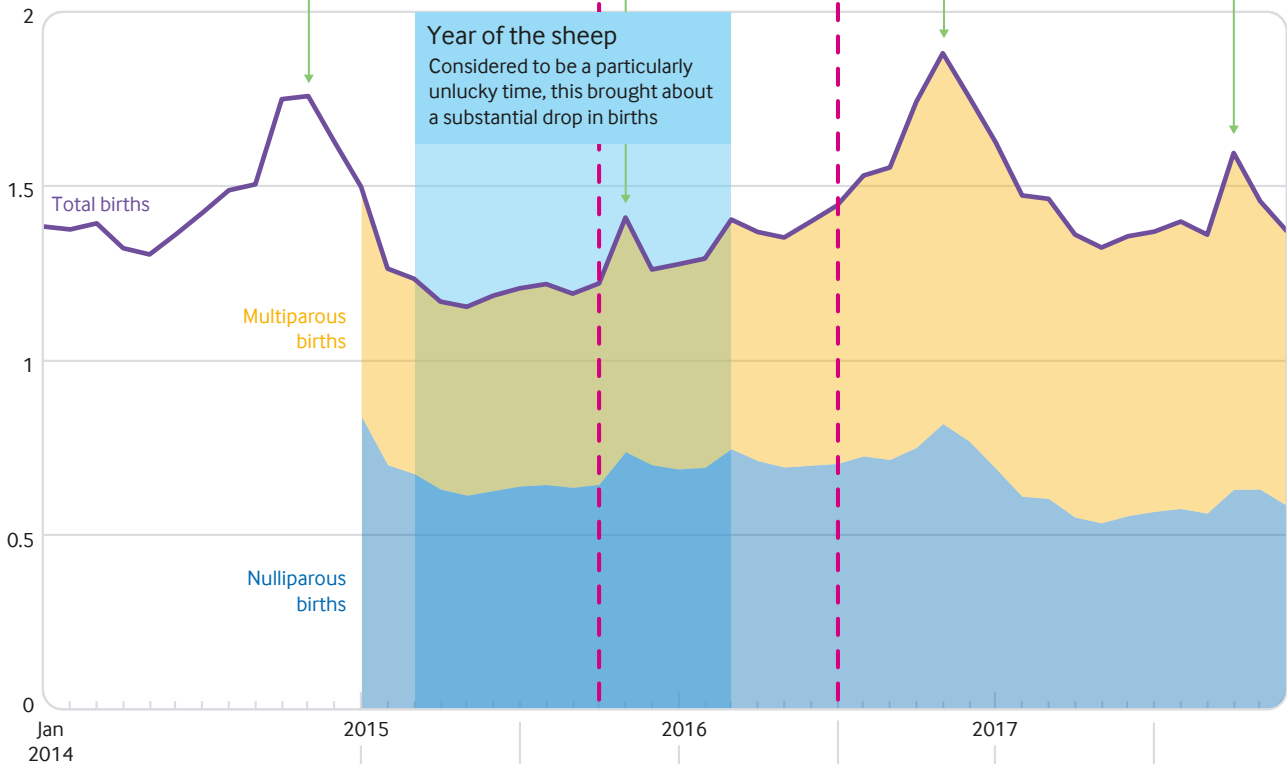
China's universal two child policy, announced in October 2015, was enacted to ameliorate the nation's stagnant population growth, ageing population, and shrinking workforce. In their paper in *The BMJ*, Li et al detail the impacts of this change on births recorded in two national databases

Universal two child policy
 Nine months after the official announcement of the two child policy, changes in birth rates started to be observed, particularly for multiparous births

When considering birth rates it is important to understand that fertility in China has long been driven by factors beyond governmental rules

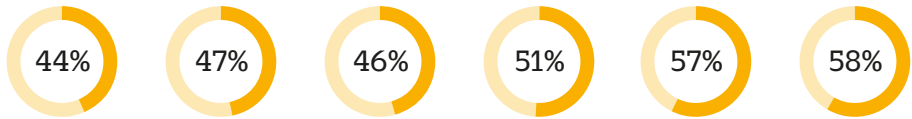
November spikes
 Births tend to peak in November, which is about nine months after families reunite for the annual spring festival

Number of births
 Millions



Percentage of births to multiparous mothers

The authors estimate that China's universal two child policy was associated with an additional 5.40 (95% CI 4.34 to 6.46) million births to multiparous women during the first 18 months that it was in effect



Percentage of births to mothers aged 35 or older

The policy was also associated with an increase in births to older mothers, which grew from 8.5% to 13.5% of all births (a 58.8% increase)

