



*Be ready, whenever
you're ready*

Fertility Awareness in 2021: Educating the Younger Generations

4TH MAY 2021

A Gedeon Richter event

What do we want to achieve today?

Gather insights and opinions from leading healthcare professionals and fertility experts, as well as patients who have undergone fertility treatments

Build a picture of the current fertility education landscape in Europe, the current reporting in the media and social media, and the role of fertility in the larger sphere of sexual health

Increase awareness and action on earlier education around fertility in Europe

A panel of experts came together to discuss how to enhance fertility education across Europe



Dr Sarah Jarvis
GP and broadcaster



Satu RH
Chairperson, Fertility Europe

Chairs



Frances Fitzgerald
Irish MEP, Dublin



Søren Ziebe, DSc., MSc
Head of Fertility Department
at Juliane Marie Centre,
Copenhagen University Hospital



Dr Enrico Papaleo
Chief of Reproductive Unit,
Ob-Gyn Department of University
Vita-Salute San Raffaele



Mariateresa Truncellito
Journalist, Italy



Angelica Alberti
Influencer, Italy

Panellists



The current landscape of fertility and fertility decline in Europe

Prof. Søren Ziebe and Satu Rautakallio-Hokkanen



Fertility Awareness and Reproductive Sustainability

Søren Ziebe



FERTILITY AWARENESS

*“It is really irritating that our biology
has not adapted to how we live today”*

A young person who was upset by a campaign we did together with the municipality of Copenhagen



REPRODUCTIVE SUSTAINABILITY

*“Too few children are born in Norway –
the Norwegian welfare model is under pressure”*

Prime minister of Norway Erna Solberg, New Year address 2019



THE PROBLEM — DANISH PERSPECTIVE

- *16-25% of all couples trying to have children will experience fertility problems*
- *10% of all children in Denmark are conceived at the fertility clinics*
- *1 in 10 Danish women never have children or have fewer children than they wished for*
- *1 in 5 Danish men never becomes a father*



MISSION

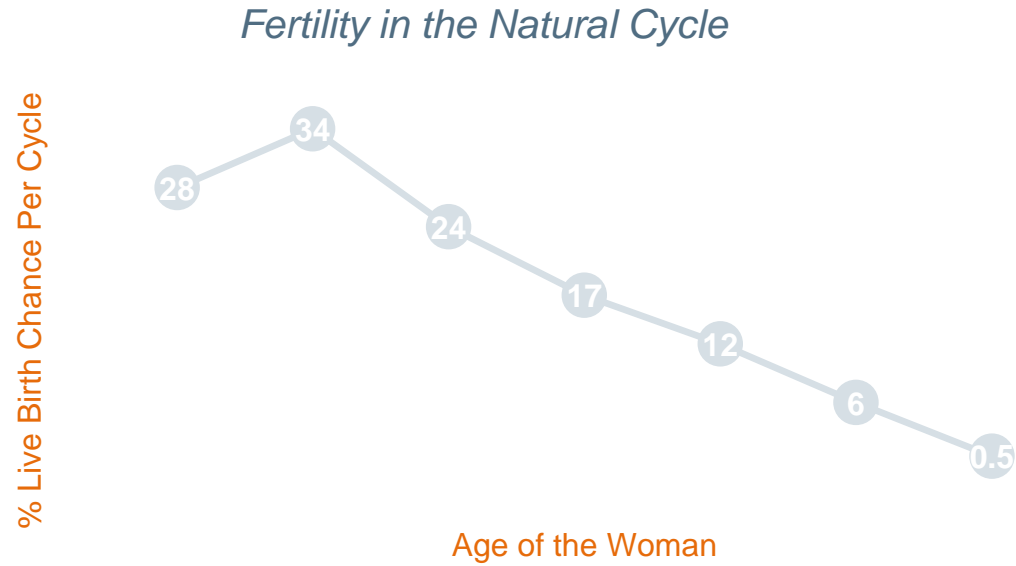
Our goal is to ensure that young people *have a greater understanding and awareness* of fertility and reproductive health, so they are *equipped with the right information to make an informed choice* about their own fertility journey.

That legislative and administrative bodies are *equipped with available evidence-based information enabling* prioritised decision making, including reproductive consequences.

To develop, implement and communicate solutions and strategies addressing *shared reproductive challenges*.

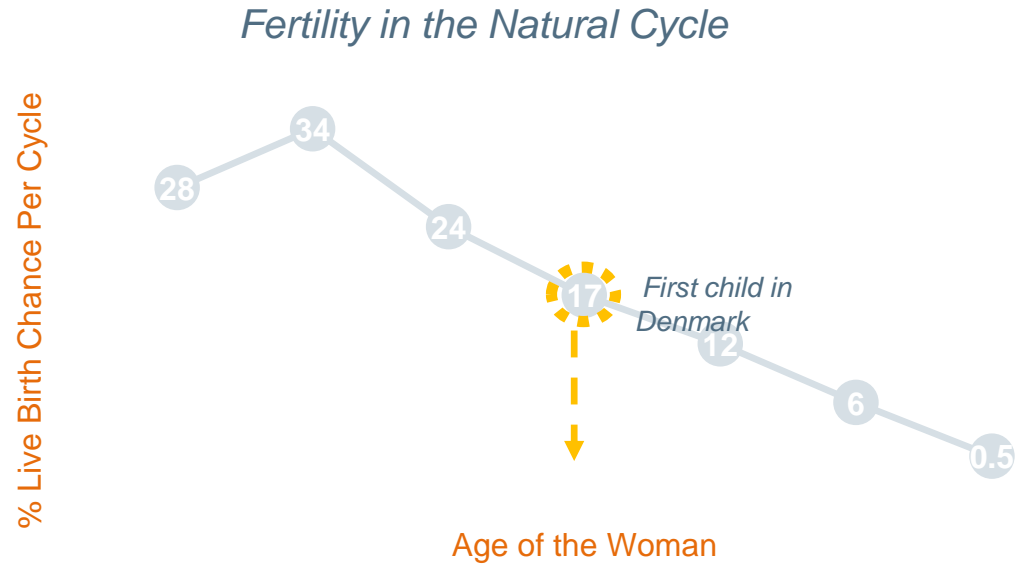


FERTILITY AWARENESS



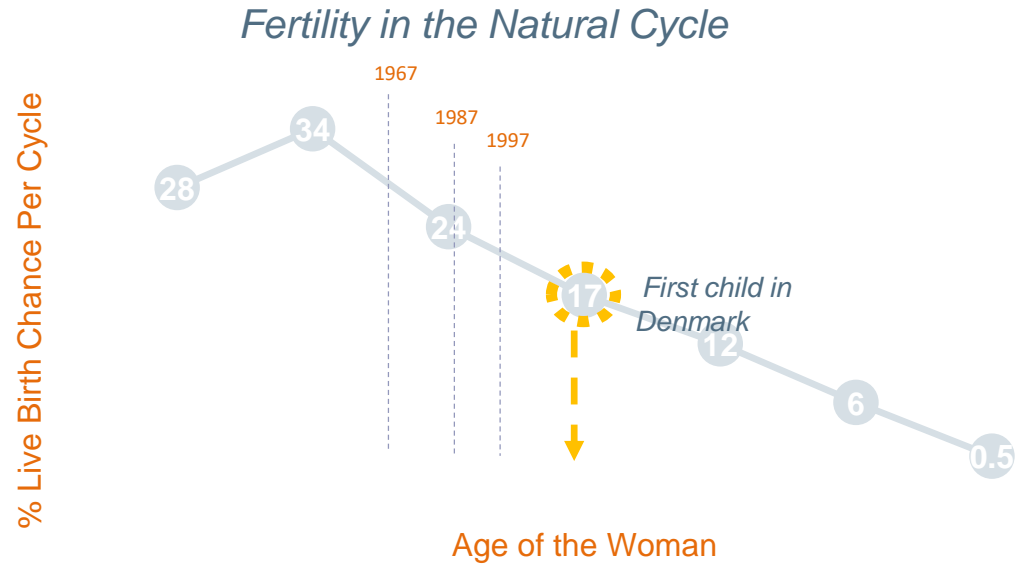


FERTILITY AWARENESS



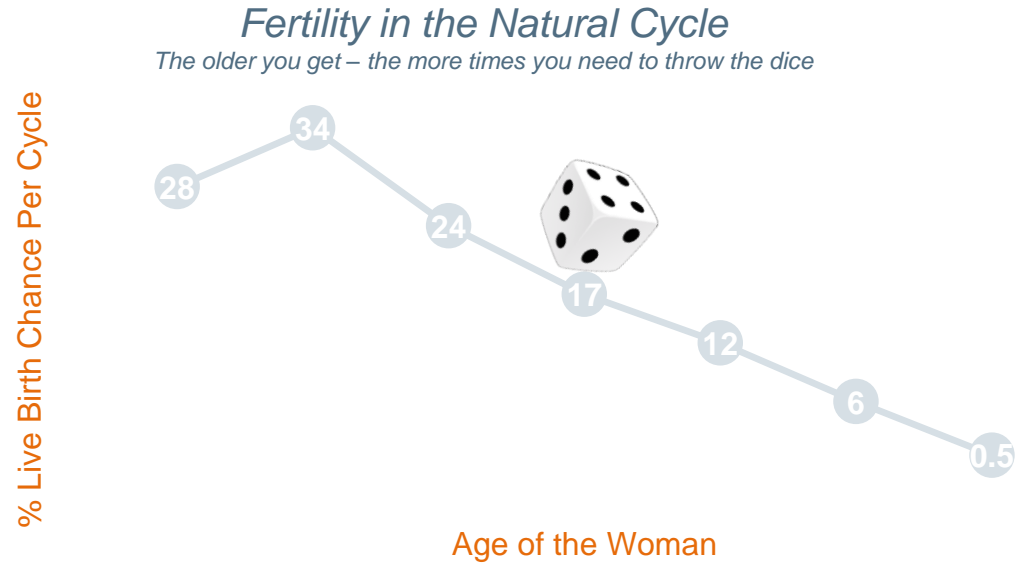


FERTILITY AWARENESS





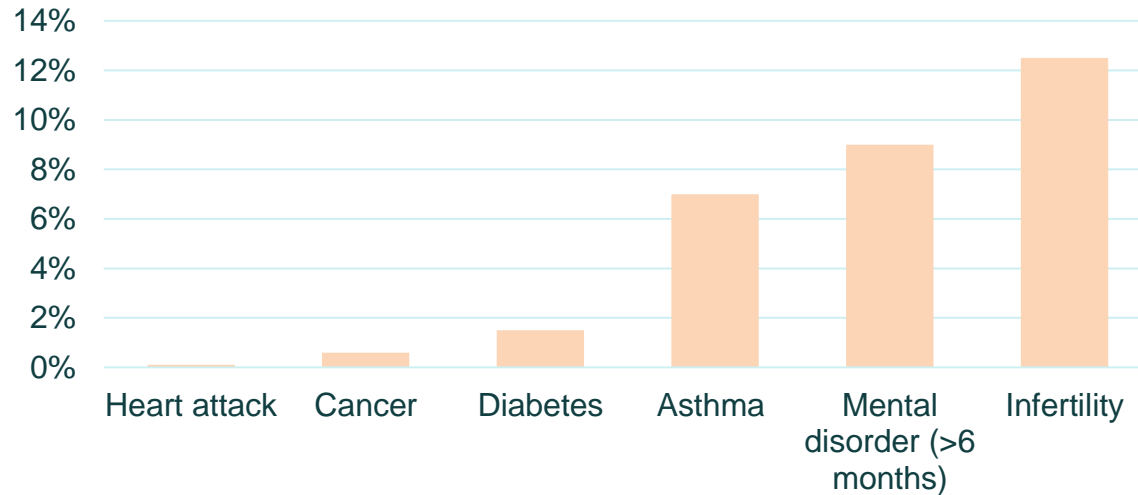
FERTILITY AWARENESS





REPRODUCTIVE SUSTAINABILITY

Infertility is by far the most prevalent chronic disease in the age group 25–44 compared to other serious chronic diseases





REPRODUCTIVE SUSTAINABILITY

And remember there is no “my fertility” and “your fertility”

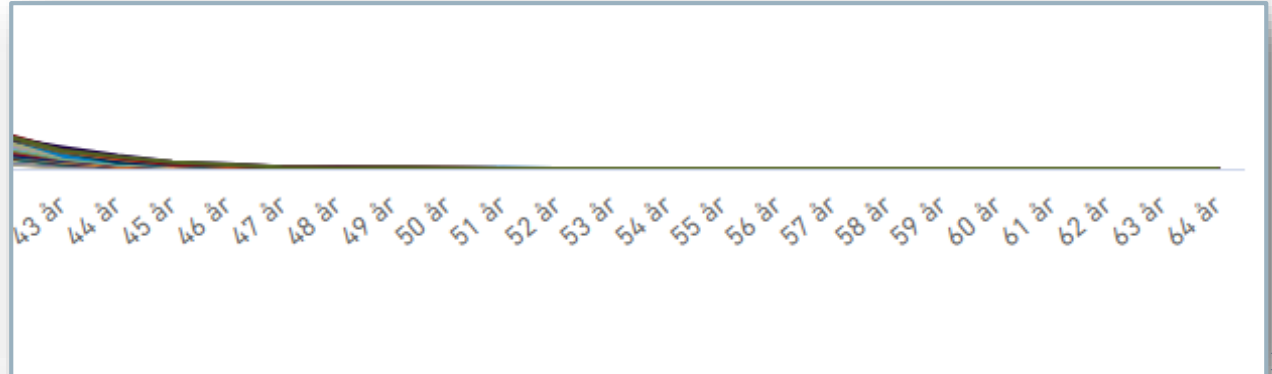
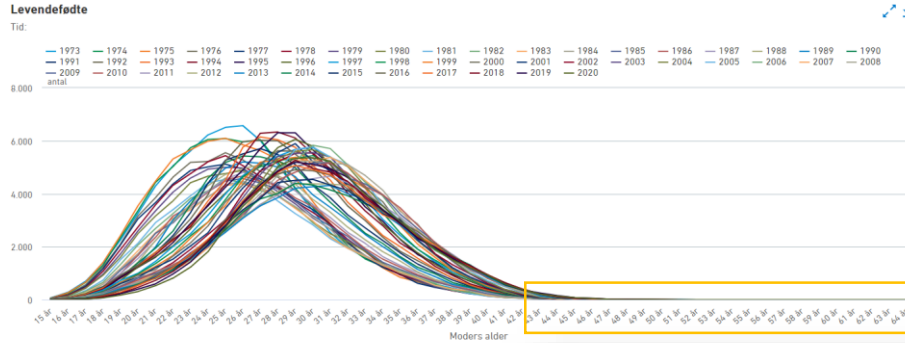
As we are having children together there is only “our fertility” (and you don’t know it until you have your children)

*MEN AND WOMEN ARE EACH OTHERS PROGNOSIS
WHEN IT COMES TO HAVING CHILDREN*



REPRODUCTIVE SUSTAINABILITY

We live longer and longer but the time in life where we can have children has not changed





REPRODUCTIVE SUSTAINABILITY

OVER THE LAST 60 YEARS THE NUMBER OF
CHILDREN BORN IN THE WORLD HAS
DROPPED BY 50% – AND LIFE EXPECTANCY
HAS INCREASED BY 20 YEARS





REPRODUCTIVE SUSTAINABILITY

Fertility, mortality, migration, and population scenarios for 195 countries and territories from 2017 to 2100: a forecasting analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study

Stein Emil Vollset, Emily Goren, Chun-Wei Yuan, Jackie Cao, Amanda E Smith, Thomas Hsiao, Catherine Bisignano, Gulrez S Azhar, Emma Castro, Julian Chalek, Andrew J Dalgert, Tahvi Frank, Kai Fukutaki, Simon I Hay, Rafael Lozano, Ali H Mokdad, Vishnu Nandakumar, Maxwell Pierce, Martin Pletcher, Tashana Robalik, Krista M Steubert, Han Yong Wunrow, Bianca S Zlavog, Christopher J L Murray

Summary

Background Understanding potential patterns in future population levels is crucial for anticipating and planning for changing age structures, resource and health-care needs, and environmental and economic landscapes. Future fertility patterns are a key input to estimation of future population size, but they are surrounded by substantial uncertainty and diverging methodologies of estimation and forecasting, leading to important differences in global population projections. Changing population size and age structure might have profound economic, social, and geopolitical impacts in many countries. In this study, we developed novel methods for forecasting mortality, fertility, migration, and population. We also assessed potential economic and geopolitical effects of future demographic shifts.

Methods We modelled future population in reference and alternative scenarios as a function of fertility, migration,



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Institute for Health Metrics
and Evaluation
(<http://www.ihme.washington.edu>)

It is forecast that in 2050, 151 countries will have a total fertility rate below 2.1 – increasing to 183 countries in 2100.

It is forecast that in 2100, the size of the population in 23 countries – including Japan, Thailand and Spain – will be reduced by more than 50% compared to 2017 and the size population of China will be reduced by 48%.



Maybe we just don't want to have children anymore?

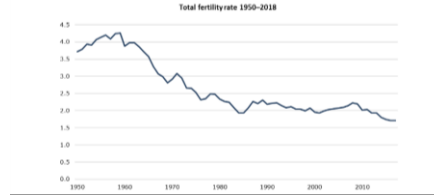
FINLAND



...in 2019, a woman would give birth to an average of 1.35 children
2020

Statistikcentralen

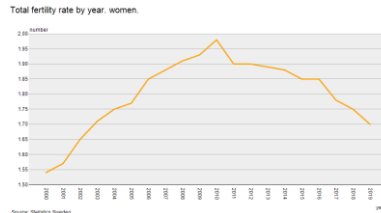
ICELAND



The total fertility rate was 1.74 in 2019

Statistics Iceland

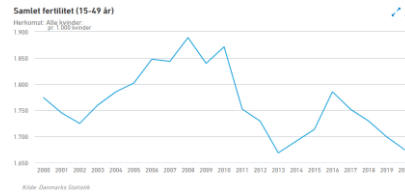
SWEDEN



The total fertility rate was 1.70 in 2019

Statistics Sweden

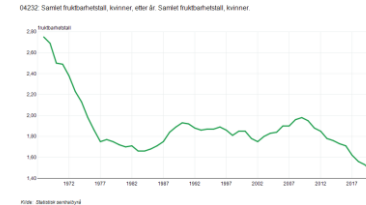
DENMARK



The total fertility rate was 1.67 in 2020

Statistics Denmark

NORWAY

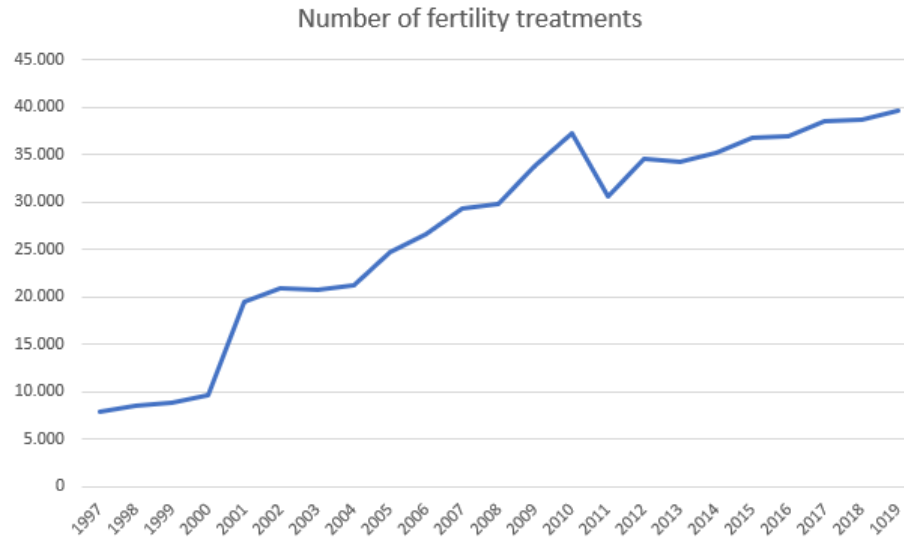


The total fertility rate was 1.48 in 2020



DENMARK

Fertility treatment as a proxy for child wish



– and 90% of all children in Denmark are conceived naturally



Do you want to have KIDS in the future?

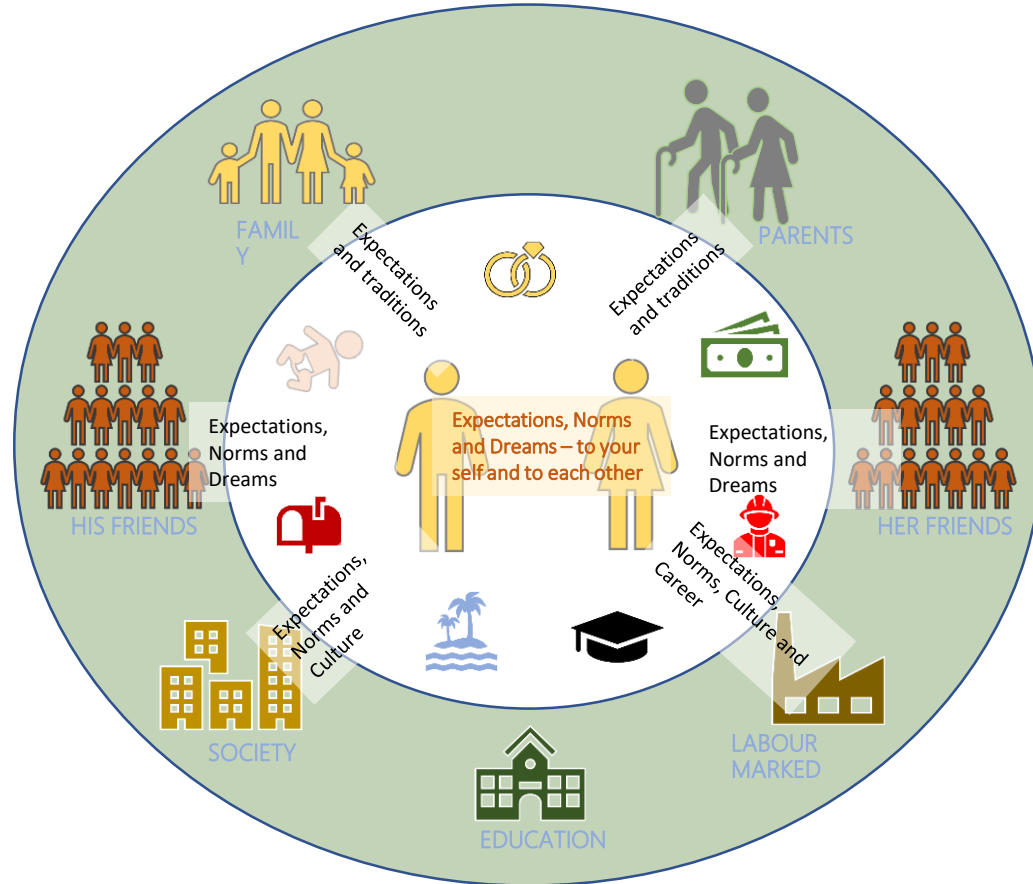
9 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW NOW

- 1** Women are born with all the eggs they are going to have. As they start trying to get pregnant, the number of eggs that are left decreases. The quality of the eggs also decreases as they age. It's best to start trying to get pregnant before you're 35, as the chances of getting pregnant are higher then. If you're over 35, the chances of getting pregnant are lower, and the risk of complications is higher.
- 2** In one episode, men produce about 100 million sperm. Once a sperm is released, it can live for about 5 days. It's best to have sex regularly, as this increases the chances of getting pregnant.
- 3** Women and men should aim to be as healthy as possible when they start trying to get pregnant. A healthy lifestyle, including a balanced diet, regular exercise, and avoiding alcohol and smoking, can increase the chances of getting pregnant and reduce the risk of complications.
- 4** Fertility is only possible from about 18 to 35. The chances of getting pregnant are highest in the 20s and 30s. If you're over 35, the chances of getting pregnant are lower, and the risk of complications is higher.
- 5** Fertility is ageist! It's best to start trying to get pregnant as soon as you can. If you're over 35, the chances of getting pregnant are lower, and the risk of complications is higher.
- 6** Most people get pregnant within a year of trying. If you have been trying for a year or more and haven't got pregnant, it's best to see a fertility specialist. They can help you understand what's going on and what you can do to increase your chances of getting pregnant.
- 7** Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) can affect fertility. If you have an STI, it's important to get it treated as soon as possible. Some STIs can cause damage to the reproductive system, which can affect fertility.
- 8** IVF cannot work without the chance of having a baby. If you're over 35, the chances of getting pregnant are lower, and the risk of complications is higher. IVF can help you get pregnant, but it's not guaranteed.
- 9** Fertility treatment can help achieve a pregnancy. If you're over 35, the chances of getting pregnant are lower, and the risk of complications is higher. Fertility treatment can help you get pregnant, but it's not guaranteed.

Logos: Clearblue, Fertility, British Society for Human Reproduction, University of Edinburgh, University of Glasgow, University of Aberdeen, University of Dundee, University of Stirling, University of Fife, University of the West of Scotland, University of Northumbria, University of Salford, University of Bolton, University of Wigan, University of Cheshire, University of Lancashire, University of Cumbria, University of West of England, University of Gloucestershire, University of Bath, University of Exeter, University of Plymouth, University of Cornwall, University of Devon, University of Cornwall, University of Devon, University of Cornwall, University of Devon.

We need many new initiatives – including educational initiatives

LIFE IS DIFFICULT TO NAVIGATE...





FERTILITY AWARENESS AND REPRODUCTIVE SUSTAINABILITY

When young people hesitate to start a family, the reason may be outdated perceptions in a changed world and distorted societal priorities and expectations.

We need societal conversations on norms, culture and traditions in the context of reproductive planning and modern life.

Assisted Reproduction is not the solution – it is only one of several tools needed.



FERTILITY AWARENESS AND REPRODUCTIVE SUSTAINABILITY

As societies, as business communities, as families, and as individuals we must recognise and accept that our biology dictates when we can have children.

The reproductive limitations in our biology are non-negotiable.

And we should accept that it is a legitimate and admirable personal priority to choose to have children while our biology still allows us to fulfill our dreams for a family.

Children should be conceived at home. It is the nice way to have children – and even more important – *the ability and willingness of young people to do so is an important marker of societal compliance with basic life quality.*

The current landscape of fertility and fertility decline in Europe

Satu Rautakallio-Hokkanen

Chair

Fertility Europe

Want to have children?



Information or misinformation?

'Happy time'- Brigitte Nielsen, 54, is pregnant with her fifth child

Twenty-three years after giving birth to youngest child, Cobra actress Brigitte Nielsen has announced her fifth pregnancy



It's a boy! 'Thrilled' Janet Jackson gives birth to her first child at age 50

By [DAILYMAIL.COM](https://www.dailymail.com) REPORTER

PUBLISHED: 22:05 BST, 3 January 2017 | UPDATED: 06:07 BST, 4 January 2017

Cameron Diaz had a baby at 47, and she doesn't owe us an explanation of how she did it

Andy Klein Jan 9, 2020, 4:35 PM



BABY BLUES Celebs 'make women over 40 think it's easy to get pregnant by hiding they had IVF'

A study of glossy magazines found interviews with A-list mums' often glamourised pregnancy on women over 40 and didn't address the process of trying for a baby

Andrea Downey

30 Oct 2017, 14:20 | Updated: 1 Nov 2017, 16:53



Fertility Europe



EUROPEAN FERTILITY WEEK

4 – 10 NOVEMBER 2019

**TEST WHAT YOU KNOW
ABOUT FERTILITY**



What, on average, is the chance of a woman getting pregnant at the age of 42 (per cycle)?



What, on average, is the chance of a woman getting pregnant at the age of 42 (per cycle)?

Over half (56%) of the respondents thought the chance is over 20%.
The right answer is only 5% per cycle.



What is the average success rate of one IVF treatment?



What is the average success rate of one IVF treatment?

One third of the respondents thought that one IVF results in the birth of a child in 50% of treatments.

The right answer is 30%.

Threats?

- Age
- Air pollution
- Chemicals
- Steroids
- Narcotics
- Unhealthy food
- STDs



Infertility in Europe

- 25 million people facing infertility in EU alone
- Every 1 in 6 couples in their fertile age
- Over 8 million babies born globally through fertility treatments

Infertility treatments in Europe

ACCES TO EVERYONE AND
EVERYWHERE?



.....unfortunately not



Access to treatments

Restriction criterias:

- ✓ Age
- ✓ Sexual orientation
- ✓ BMI
- ✓ Marital status
- ✓ Level of hormones
- ...etc.

Availability of treatments

Limited treatments:

- ✓ Egg donation
- ✓ Embryo freezing
- ✓ Surrogacy
- ...etc.

Patients' rights

Treatments should be:

- ✓ Safe
- ✓ Efficient
- ✓ High quality
- ✓ Fair
- ✓ Well monitored
- ✓ Transparently reported

Fertility legislation

In some European countries:

- ✓ Lacking totally
- ✓ Only partial
- ✓ Limiting the selection of treatments
- ✓ Outdated

Funding/reimbursement of treatments

In some European countries public funding is:

- ✓ Missing totally
- ✓ Excluding certain treatments
- ✓ Excluding certain procedures
- ✓ Regional disparities in a country (post code lottery)

Educate
Advocate
Talk
Teach



Fertility awareness project 2021-2024

Educational:

To increase the level of fertility awareness among teenagers aged 15-18 – the future parents.

Advocacy:

To provide the policy makers with reliable information on fertility awareness level, advocating for actions on European and national level.

Scientific:

Report on fertility awareness level of the age group by gender, by age, by region, by time.



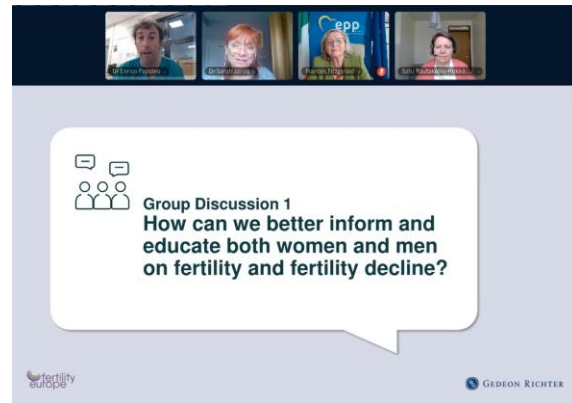
Group Discussion 1

How can we better inform and educate both women and men on fertility and fertility decline?

Discussion 1: How can we better inform and educate both men and women on fertility and fertility decline?

Dr Sarah Jarvis, Dr Enrico Papleo, Frances Fitzgerald MEP, Satu Rautakallio-Hokkanen

- The panel discussed how language matters in creating awareness – certain messages do not resonate with a non-medical audience. Reworking and simplifying language and messaging can open up the debate to wider audiences, whilst breaking down taboos
 - **“We all need to be on the same page, speak the same language and speak directly to the younger generation” – Satu Rautakallio-Hokkanen**
- There was discussion around barriers to fertility such as concerns about female career progression, work-life balance and cultural pressures
 - Many people believe that fertility is not an issue, and they do not fully understand the rate of fertility decline
 - Raising awareness of fertility decline can help to educate both men and women before they miss their opportunity to have a family
- The panel noted that we must start with the basics – education in schools. A clear and controlled sex education curriculum that informs young people about their fertility is a must
 - **“Integrate fertility knowledge into education and people’s life choices can be informed, from the very beginning” – Frances Fitzgerald, MEP**





Group Discussion 2
Fertility in the media
– what do we know?

Discussion 2: Fertility in the media, what do we know?

Angelica Alberti, Dr Enrico Papaleo, Dr Sarah Jarvis, Maria-Teresa Truncellito, Prof. Soren Ziebe, Satu Rautakallio-Hokkanen

- The panel discussed how fertility is reported in the media, and what can be done to get the message across
- Much of what is reported on in the media is misleading, as journalists tend to only promote the successful patients, or positive messages i.e. “IVF works”. Only occasionally do articles focus on prevention and encourage readers to think about their fertility from a young age.
 - **“Everybody has to be responsible...the doctors, the media...social media platforms are huge, and can shape understanding. If the media promotes these messages, it will provoke conversation. The media is the starting point.” – Dr Enrico Papaleo**
- Nowadays, most people get information online, especially young people who learn on social media. The level of knowledge online is often superficial so we need to increase the level of important information circulated online
 - **“Among university students, around 90% obtain information from the internet” – Angelica Alberti**
- The panel noted that there can be a sense of shame in discussing fertility, and **men are often removed from the dialogue**
- There should be a drive for **normalising the discourse surrounding fertility for both men and women**
 - **“The earlier you start thinking about fertility, the better HCPs can help” – Professor Soren Ziebe**



There is an obvious lack of attention to fertility decline and awareness in the media, and the audience is often older generations who are already parents or grandparents.

What does the media currently report on?

- Personal stories - articles seek to give hope, e.g.
 - Success of assisted fertility techniques in cancer patients
 - Pregnancy that finally comes after many years of trying
 - News of a celeb that becomes a mother at an old age is celebrated as something positive, a hope for other women



*Be ready, whenever
you're ready*

**Thank you
for your time!**