

Beat: Technology

## THE FRENCH BIRTH RATE IS NOW THE HIGHEST IN EUROPE ACCORDING TO A NEW STUDY

### FRANCE HAS OVERTAKEN IRELAND

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**USPA NEWS** - France has overtaken Ireland to reach the top of the birth rate league in Europe, according to a report released on November 4, by France's national statistics agency Insee. Since 2006 France has been the only country among its neighbours to record a high and stable birth rate...

France has overtaken Ireland to reach the top of the birth rate league in Europe, according to a report released on November 4, by France's national statistics agency Insee. Since 2006 France has been the only country among its neighbours to record a high and stable birth rate.

Most of the other European countries saw declining birth rates that matched their countries' gloomy economies in the face of the financial crisis.

Since the early 2000s France has consistently topped European rankings. After two decades of decline, in the 1970s-80s, the fertility rate started picking up again in the late 1990s. Since then the country has registered scores just short of the mythical threshold of 2.1 children per woman, which would secure a steady population. Its fertility rate in 2014 was 2.01. 'For the economy Germany is the strong man of Europe, but when it comes to demography France is our fecund woman,' says demographer Ron Lesthaeghe, member of the Belgian Royal Academy of Sciences and emeritus professor of Brussels Free University.

The critical role of the family policy (France Diplomatie in 2013) :

The family policy helps to explain this "French exception." France was the first country to introduce an active family support policy characterized by:

- The payment of family benefits (housing benefit, family allowance, early childhood benefit)
- The introduction of specific forms of leave (maternity leave, paternity leave),
- Tax allowances (quotient familial (number of people in the family)) or specific benefits (cartes famille nombreuses (large family card), retirement benefits, etc.)
- Child care facilities available from a very young age

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