

Political Science and Administration

Social Policies

A SMALL PART OF SOCIAL POLICIES: POLICIES OF BIRTH

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If we think of the welfare state we think of all those measures which form a set of actions developed by governments for the welfare and quality of life citizens through the state budget. We tend to think of pensions, health, education and social services are not mistaken, are the main areas Welfare State.

Family policies are also part of the policy that must develop a Welfare State. During the Franco dictatorship (1936-1975) there were virtually family policies, only "economic awards" to the birth, aimed at those families have many children. With the transition and the incorporation of women into the labor, and progress regarding this issue in Europe, the word begins to appear "conciliation", however we are still far from achieving it. The possibility of a new panorama without inequality, where women can achieve the same rights and real opportunities than men, and can exercise them, it must be possible without the need to renounce motherhood or without the need to reduce the number of children desired to have.

And if we talk about the number of children, the figures are worrying, more women they have fewer children and have a more mature age. The consequences are an index of very low fertility and population pyramid worrying. The Report of the Evolution Spain family in 2014, conducted by the Institute for Family Policy and Status Special consultation with the Economic and Social Council, speaks deficit birth. *Born 116,000 children less (down 20.4%) than in 1980, despite population increase more than 9 million people in this period and injection of birth foreign mothers (86,945 births in 2012), without which we would be in the same levels of births in 2000. Only Portugal (1.28) and Poland (1.30) have an index fertility worse than the Spanish* (see Annex 1).

The attitude towards family policies by the Spanish government has been lousy. As usual, the parties have fought to destroy what little they had built the before, and today we are facing a situation that should have put in place policies and urgent measures have not been carried out. Policies scarce family existing in Spain and not go beyond any financial assistance and scholarships. Other European countries, concerned for years about the low birth rate, family policies implemented and specifically birth, which have increased the number of children per woman. The country with greater deployment of these policies has been France, that in ten years has managed to double the number of children per woman, placing it in the current 2.1. Family policies need to be a priority. The birth rate must rise. The solution, is to increase the birth rate, developing policies that benefit the whole population, while betting for equality between men and women in the market labor as in the field of child care is possible.

The challenge of parenting

The organization of family life and relationship between the family, the state, and the market vary profoundly within and across national settings. In some countries, the particularity of family is uppermost with family seen as distinct from the state and public life. More liberal perspectives privilege family privacy and generally eschew intervention in the family but, rather than setting up and elaborate architecture for this purpose, the preference is to leave family to its own devices (Daly 2010).

This is what happens in Spain. In our country, the family and what it includes (for such as birth and child care) has been left in the hands of the families themselves, keeping the government as a spectator. It is possible that a few decades ago did not lack intervene in the family, perhaps it was not as necessary as family policies do families and had many children (an average of 3 in 1970 according to the INE) and care children was not a problem because the woman was engaged full time on it. Nevertheless our country has evolved and has undergone major changes that have affected the structure the family.

With regard to birth, the most important direct effect has been the incorporation of the women in the workplace. Unfortunately it is still the woman who takes care mostly children, but with a workday can not do it like

formerly: Full time. However, we do not speak only of working hours, but career. Now the woman wants to pursue a career and it is necessary first to have a good education (currently in the university students women more than men) and subsequently grow professionally in the workplace. Women not only work outside the home, but it has higher education, develop a career and may have positions responsibility.

What has happened is that they have not provided solutions to the problem of absence of the mother at home and are still waiting for the woman to be a mother, engaged only the care of their children at least during the first years of life of the creature. *How can we care for our children?* It is probably the main question to be made couples who want to be parents.

But it is not logical to say that the low birth rate is due solely to this. Now, get a good long training process, young people increasingly have more years studying and demands and requirements, which also delays the time to have a stability economic order, to keep son. This makes, therefore, that the age of first child is late, currently reaching the age of 30.3 years (see Annex 2). If the age of the first is delayed child carries a higher probability that women have fewer children, and fertility

It is reduced over the years. For some years, moreover, our country suffers a crisis difficult economic many couples have children. Unemployment is particularly high among young and is very difficult to have an economic stability that allows not only to have a child but, to give a good quality of life. It is therefore that the second question to be made many couples who want children is *how can we keep our son ensuring a good quality of life?*

This idea is not catastrophic. Currently 1 in 3 children in Spain is at risk of poverty or social exclusion (Save the Children).

The solution is not because women stop working to care for children (the use of the mother also is becoming a precondition for preventing poverty in families), or are forced to reduce their working hours. Currently, 8 out of 10 reductions days are requested by women. Nor is the solution more option contested in recent years, grandparents care for grandchildren.

The solution to the low birth rate is not immigration, because it is definitely a solution short-term alternative. The solution is to develop family policies that favor the birth and women do not have to choose between a career and motherhood.

Birth is not a matter only of family, birth is a demographic issue and everyone's business. The importance of caring for children should be aware of all, they are our best investment, and it seems that we are not able to realize while we became one of the oldest countries. Parenting is not easy, but that difficulty becomes almost impossible in a country like Spain, which only allocates 0.5% of GDP on family policies. It's a challenge being a parent in a country that does not give you benefits or facilities to be.

A welfare deficit

Women who want to be mothers themselves, when they are asked to Spanish women say they want to have, on average, 2.4 children. We can interpret this distance between desire and reality as a *deficit of welfare* (Esping-Andersen, 2001).

As we have said, young people are increasingly difficult to achieve stability economic, due to job uncertainty, leading for example to a very high difficulty be able to purchase a home (which also has very high costs in our country). In order to have that stability in most cases good training is needed, It involved a long process, becoming more years. Later, when we are developing our career seems that having a child will be a impediment thereto. Fewer children and later. The Italian demographer Massimo Livi Bacci has called this *syndrome postponement*. You continue with the current system undoubtedly lead to a stagnation of birth and to a decline in family formation.

This syndrome concerns an entire continent, Europe, which increasingly has a more birth low. However, countries like France, Sweden, Holland, Denmark and Norway, have for years implementing measures to slow the aging population increasing birth.

The word conciliation is a key word for parents to care their children without having to quit your job. Spain has a system of conciliation work and family far than many countries such as those named above. Labor flexibility in our country is minimal, which also makes it very difficult to reconcile. This brings an almost obligatory choice: part-time work. This day, which we talked about before, is requested mainly by women. The why it is obvious. First, the burdens of a patriarchal system seem to imply that good mother will make that decision, it is she who should do it. Secondly, as a matter economic: women earn less than men. If one of the two members must give up part of their salary, couples decide that is the lowest salary.

To remove the myth that it is impossible to improve birth change if women continue progressing professionally and being absent at home, we can see the example of Denmark, where an average of two children per woman is compatible with full employment female. Aid to families in Spain are very bad. In fact, they are almost nonexistent. Countries

appointed have increased economic aid to secure an income Minimum families, as well as a relaxation in the criteria for access programs welfare (Esping-Andersen, 2001). They have also increased the tax exemptions increase the purchasing power of families or have extended maternity leave or paternity (which in Spain is at 16 weeks versus 52 weeks, for example, Denmark).

They should increase both maternity leave as paternity. Is an error only increase mothers since it from the first moment dictates sign that it is the mother who must care for the child. This has a direct and negative effect on hiring women. Therefore, and because children are entitled to enjoy its parents, something essential to their cognitive development and parents to enjoy their children, both must extend maternity leave as paternity, and that they be transferable.

France ranks as the country with the highest birth rates in Europe. Currently, the French They have an average of 2.1 children. Their policies are the quintessential family promotion. They stand in them paying family benefits (housing assistance, grants family, financial aid for children up to six years), setting permissions specific (maternity, paternity), tax breaks (relative ratio) or benefits individuals (credentials for large families, retirement benefits, etc.) and establishment of structures for very young children, numerous devices (kindergartens, soup kitchens) allow you to combine motherhood and professional life. The different structures receiving children generate jobs while allowing to women participate in economic dynamism. The high rate of activity of women (85%) contributes to promote professional equality between men and women (Ministry of Affairs and Development of France) affairs.

For its part, Sweden, which in the 70s suffered a very sharp decline in the birth rate, implemented policies aimed at improving working conditions for people with children. The main mechanisms were flexible working hours and extensive permits for people with children with reasonable economic conditions (Valdes, 2000)

Conclusions

Family and concrete policies, aimed at birth, have borne fruit in the countries that previously they appointed (France, Sweden, Holland, Denmark and Norway), seeing increased its birth rate in recent years. Specifically, these countries with five more, are the European countries with highest fertility rate (see Annex 3).

Spain has put in the background family policies. This has been a serious mistake that we has led to the current situation: Spain is an aging country where ever born less children. This has happened because society has changed, women have joined the labor market, but now both the father and the mother increase their training and thus they aspire to a better career. The latter seems to dream if you want combine with being a parent. These changes produced in the field of training and in the workplace, they have not been accompanied by family policies.

The conciliation should be possible, and should be for both sexes, distorting every time plus the idea that it is the woman who must deal mostly of childcare and home. That makes lack of equality policies that equip men and women, the parents, the same types of permits, the same number of days, with the same conditions, and mandatory and non-transferable. Women cannot have children because It struggles to achieve economic stability and because they feel their career threatened if in the midst of this,

decide to be a mother. Establishing the same conditions for them and they will be achieved that companies are discriminatory when hiring a woman, since hiring a man or a woman be indifferent with regard to low and days off.

Birth should be a matter of concern to society and a subject which develops government policies. Should not only have to bring more children into the world, but also, look after them and give them the best. Swedish Prime Minister once said that the "Quality of a nation can be measured by how his childhood is".