

For Immediate Release

HAVE BABIES, AVOID A PINK SLIP?

New report from international academics links declining fertility with economic slowdown; highlights global attitudes toward family

October 3, 2011 (Ottawa) – A new international report released today highlights the links between a strong economy and marriage and family. The core message of the report *The Sustainable Demographic Dividend: What do Marriage and Fertility have to do with the economy?* is that the wealth of nations depends in no small part on the health of the family.

“A first-order effect of the globe’s waning population,” say the report’s authors, “is a slowdown in the size of the global workforce.”

Families are the engine of our economy. “It’s past time to consider how marriage and fertility play a critical role in sustaining long-term economic growth, alongside the viability of the welfare state, the size and quality of the workforce and the profitability of various economic sectors,” says Institute of Marriage and Family Canada Manager of Research, Andrea Mrozek.

Certainly the viability of our social programs is of critical importance in Canada. However, today Canadian families are small. This means we have a growing sector of the elderly to care for while the percentage of young people declines, creating a financial burden on the age group that is both raising young children and creating economic growth. “The highest rates of entrepreneurial activity are found among those age 25–34—an age group whose numbers will be shrinking in many advanced countries,” reads the report’s section about the new demographic reality in the 21st century.

A side note is that married parents with children spend more money on a variety of sectors of the economy, providing financial motivation for private enterprise to care more about strong families. A section in the report itemizes which economic sectors stand to gain the most profit from healthy families and what these companies can do to improve their bottom line.

The report also itemizes family indicators and family attitudes in 29 countries across the globe. Canadian attitudes include:

- Sixty-five percent of Canadians believe children need to be raised in a home with both a mother and a father in order to be happy;
- Seventy-eight percent of Canadians disagree that marriage is an outdated institution;
- And 95 percent of Canadians think that family life deserves more attention.

The report’s bottom line is not about profitability for particular industries. It’s about the bigger picture of economic growth, combined with building up human potential. The report is filled with recommendations and solutions to aid families in tough economic times. For example, what if parents saw their payroll tax deductions drop by one-third for one child, two-thirds with a second child and no payroll tax deductions for three or more children? Suggestions such as these ease the burden on families raising children.

This is a collaborative effort from The Social Trends Institute, authored by international academics including W. Bradford Wilcox, Carlos Cavallé and Phillip Longman, among others. The Institute of Marriage and Family Canada is proud to be one of the institutional sponsors alongside Universidad de los Andes (Chile), University of Asia and the Pacific (Philippines), Universitat Internacional de Catalunya (Spain), Universidad de la Sabana (Colombia), Universidad de Piura (Peru), and the National Marriage Project (United States).

For more information and to view the report, please check <http://sustaindemographicdividend.org>.

To arrange an interview please contact Andrea Mrozek at 613-565-3832.

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