

Reform UK Targets Birth Rate with Family Policies

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LONDON, Reform UK, led by Nigel Farage, has unveiled policies to address Britain's declining birth rate, with family welfare as a central theme of the party's platform.

The party argues that Britain faces a demographic challenge, with population growth increasingly reliant on net migration rather than natural increases. Reform UK claims that

current economic pressures make it difficult for many families to have children and that government policy has done little to encourage family formation.

“We are looking at policies that make it easier for British families to have children,” a Reform UK spokesperson said. “At the same time, we are addressing immigration levels to ensure our population growth is sustainable.”

Among the party’s proposals is scrapping the two-child benefit cap, introduced in 2017, which limits state support to the first two children. Reform UK says it would tailor removal to working parents rather than families solely on benefits.

The party also proposes new tax incentives for married couples, including making one partner exempt from paying income tax on the first £25,000 earned. Reform UK describes this as a practical support measure, not a moral directive.

These policies appear to resonate with younger voters, particularly women. Saffron Sims-Brydon, a 22-year-old Reform UK councillor for Derwent and Pont Valley, said financial pressures often limit the ability of young adults to start families. “You used to be able to live off one salary,” she said. “Now, many need two incomes to manage family life. Economic pressures are a major factor in family planning decisions.”

Experts caution, however, that government policies alone may have a limited impact on birth rates. Joe Shalam, policy director at the Centre for Social Justice, notes that while targeted policies can provide support, cultural and economic factors play a significant role in family planning.

Britain’s birth rate remains below replacement levels. The Office for National Statistics reported 594,677 live births in England and Wales in 2024, the first increase since 2021, but population growth still depends on migration.

Reform UK’s family-oriented approach is intended to appeal to voters concerned with welfare. The party emphasises targeted support for working families without encouraging benefit dependency. Reform UK MP Sarah Pochin stated, “We are focusing on working parents. Our policies are designed to support families without promoting a culture of dependency on benefits.”

Analysts suggest that the emphasis on family policy could help Reform UK attract voters who are dissatisfied with Labour’s welfare measures, such as the retention of the two-child

benefit cap and proposed cuts to disability payments. “The party is filling a gap where some voters feel government policy is not addressing family needs,” said Louis O’Geran, research associate at More in Common.

Reform UK insists its family policies are not intended to replicate culture wars from abroad. Pochin noted that the party’s platform is based on traditional British family values, rather than adopting a stance on issues such as abortion or same-sex marriage. Polling indicates that Reform UK voters broadly support marriage equality, suggesting that the party’s approach focuses on economic and social support rather than cultural restriction.

The party’s policy proposals reflect a broader trend seen in other countries, where conservative parties are increasingly emphasising economic incentives to encourage family growth. Patrick Brown, a family policy expert in the United States, explained that younger conservative voices internationally are prioritising economic measures to address low fertility, rather than engaging in cultural debates.

Shalam argues that Reform UK is similarly seeking to align tax and benefit systems in a way that encourages family formation. “The party is attempting to create a framework that supports families financially, recognising the challenges many households face,” he said.

As Britain continues to grapple with demographic challenges and economic pressures on families, Reform UK’s policies signal a renewed focus on family welfare as a political issue. The party’s approach is positioned to appeal to voters seeking practical solutions to support family life in the current economic climate, while maintaining a clear stance on responsible welfare provision.