

IVI Institute

Fertility Barometer Portugal

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY **OCTOBER 2026**

Research conducted by GfK, a NielsenIQ company

Published by IVI Institute in partnership with IVI Fertility



Methodology and objectives

STUDY POPULATION

Women aged 19–49 years old
Portugal (~2.2M)

SAMPLE SIZE

1,008 interviews

SURVEY DATES

June 10 –July 2, 2026

SELECTION CRITERIA

Nationally representative
sample, with quotas on age,
region and education

METHODOLOGY

Online interviews (Computer
Assisted Web Interviews)

MARGIN OF ERROR

±3.09 percentage points at the
95% confidence level (p=q=50%)

ABOUT THE STUDY

Fertility is an urgent social and public health issue, yet it is still discussed with little evidence on what people themselves think, want, and fear. The IVI Institute Fertility Barometer was created to close that gap.

The study was conducted by GfK, a NielsenIQ company, in collaboration with the member brands of IVI Institute and spans nine countries. It examines how people think about fertility, parenthood and family formation, and the barriers that shape reproductive decisions today. Participating brands: IVI Fertility, Everleap Fertility, ART Fertility, Genera, Create Fertility, LIVIO, and TRIO Clinics.

This report sets out findings for Portugal and what they reveal about the future of family planning and motherhood.

IVI INSTITUTE Global leader in reproductive medicine

200+

locations in 15 countries

5

basic research centers

100+

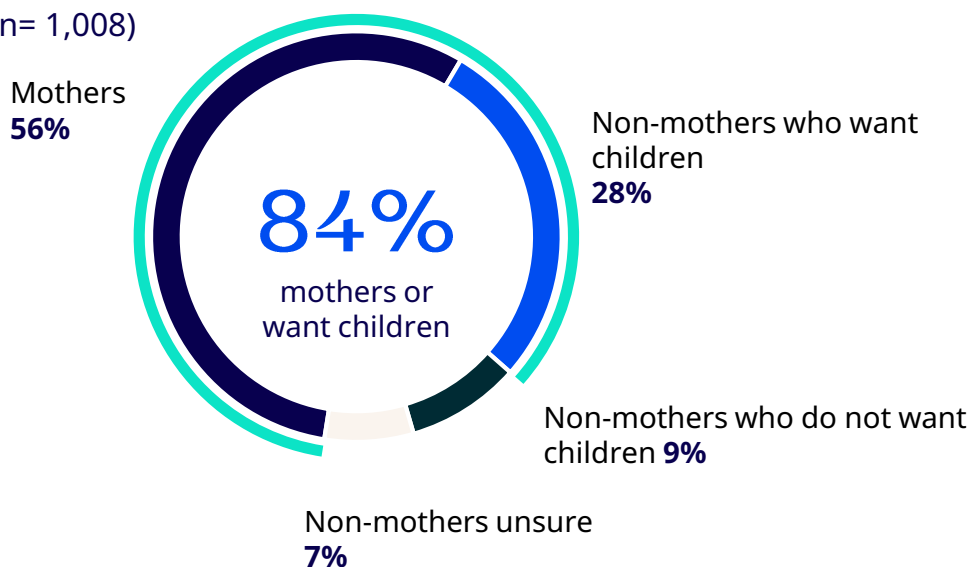
babies born every day

Motherhood remains a strong aspiration

The findings from the IVI Institute Fertility Barometer for Portugal show that the desire for motherhood remains strong: 84% of women aged 19–49 are already mothers or want children. For most Portuguese women, motherhood remains an important life goal, with 57% describing it as one of their highest personal priorities.

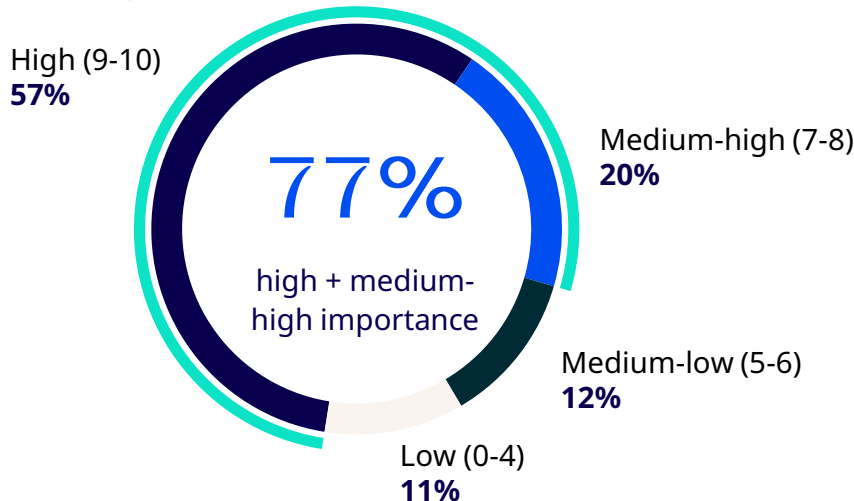
Current motherhood status

% of women (n= 1,008)



Importance of becoming a mother

% of women (n= 1,008)



[Q] Thinking about the future, would you like to have more children?
[Q] Thinking about the future, would you like to have children?
[Q] How important is becoming a mother to you?
Components may not sum exactly due to rounding

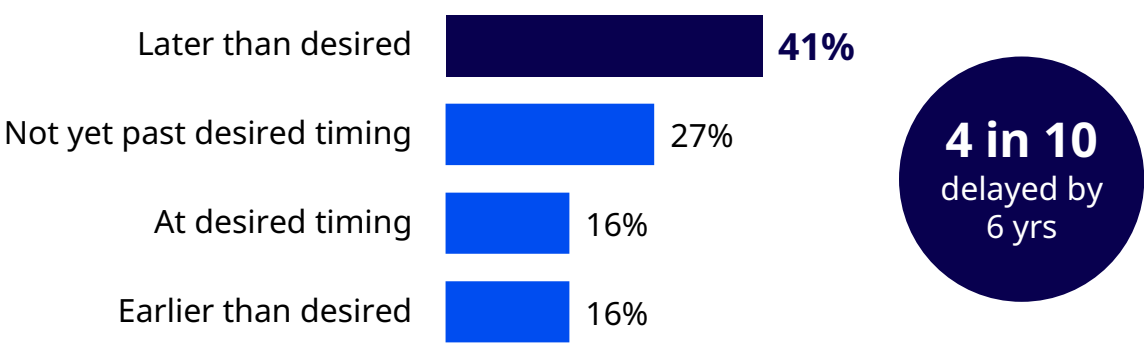
Women are having children later—and fewer than they intended

The findings reveal a gap between women’s aspirations for motherhood and their experience. Women report an ideal age of 26 for having their first child, but many become mothers later than they intended. 41% of mothers in Portugal report having children later than they originally planned.

Mothers ideally want 2.5 children but have 1.7 on average, suggesting a gap between intended and actual family size—not simply a declining desire for children.

Timing of first child

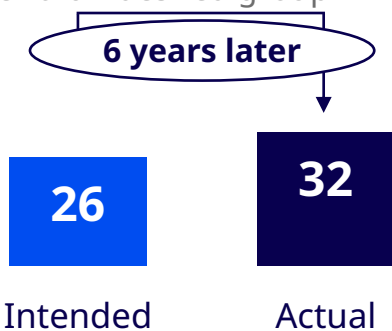
% of women who have target age(n= 667)



Intended vs. actual

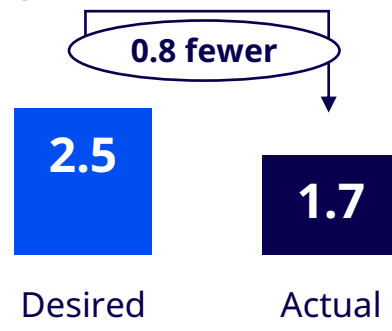
Age at first child

Later-than-desired group



Children per mother

Mothers



[Q] At what age would you like to or would you have liked to have gotten pregnant for the first time?

[Q] At what age did you get pregnant?

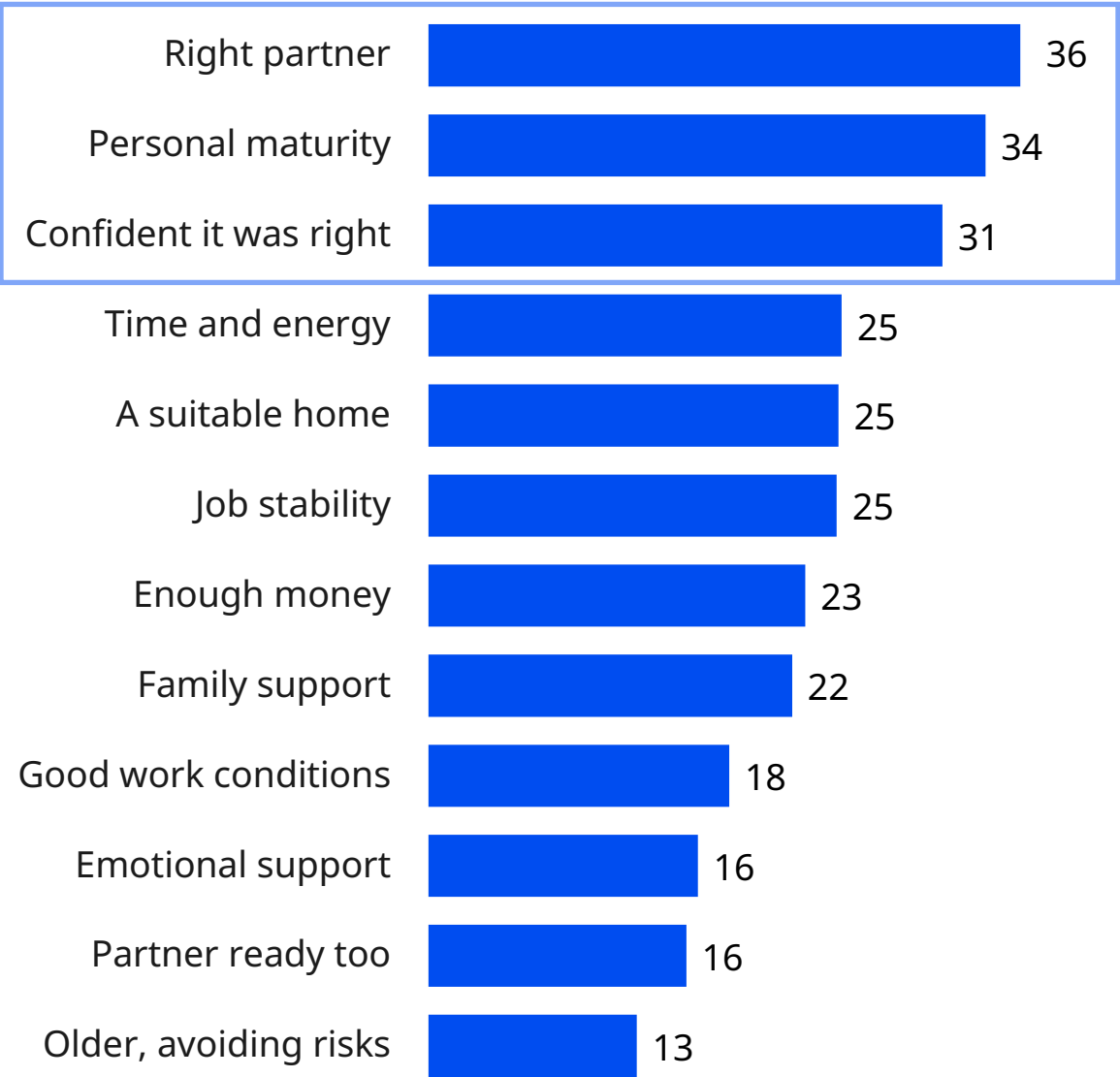
[Q] How many children would you like to have in total, including those you already have?

Women are delaying motherhood because of life circumstances

Finding the right partner, reaching personal maturity, and feeling confident in the decision are the key factors shaping when women become mothers.

What made it the right time

already mothers or pregnant (n= 571)

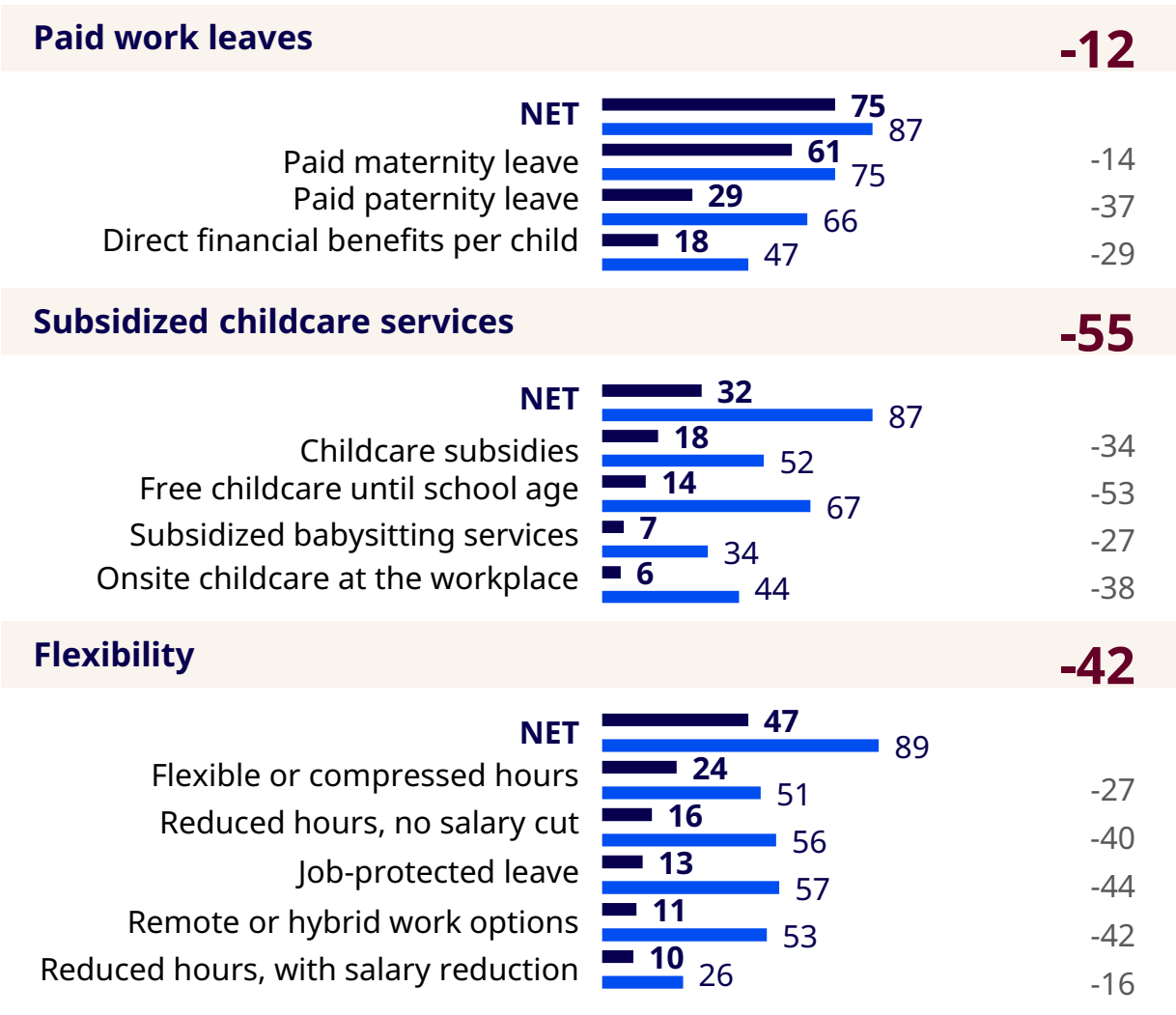


Leave is largely solved in Portugal, flexibility and childcare are not

The findings reveal a clear gap between the family benefits mothers value and those they can access. While paid leave benefits are relatively well established, childcare support continues to show the largest shortfall between access and demand. Flexible work arrangements also remain out of reach for many mothers, despite being widely viewed as essential for balancing work and family responsibilities.

Access vs. desire for family benefits

% of mothers (n= 561)



Gap shown at right, in percentage points ■ Accessed ■ Desired

340k women in Portugal have experienced infertility

The study shows that experiencing infertility is far more common than many people assume. Nearly one in six Portuguese women aged 19–49 report having experienced infertility at some point in their lives—about 340,000 women. Around 75,000 women (3%) report experiencing infertility in the last 12 months.

Lifetime — ever experienced

340k

15% of Portuguese women aged 19–49

Last 12 months — experiencing now

75k

3% of Portuguese women aged 19–49

Primary infertility

~210k

9% — unable to achieve a first pregnancy

Primary infertility — experiencing now

~51k

~2% — trying now without success, no previous pregnancy

Secondary infertility

~130k

6% — unable to achieve another pregnancy

Secondary infertility — experiencing now

~24k

~1% — trying now without success after a previous pregnancy

Women experience a substantial toll, not routinely met with support

Experiencing infertility can have a substantial negative impact: 76% of women who have experienced it rate the impact as highly negative (7 out of 10 or higher). Yet support does not consistently match that burden—only 48% of those who consulted a doctor or health professional were offered psychological support.

Impact of fertility challenges

% who tried to conceive for 12 months without success (n= 113)
0 = has not impacted me at all • 10 = has impacted me extremely negatively



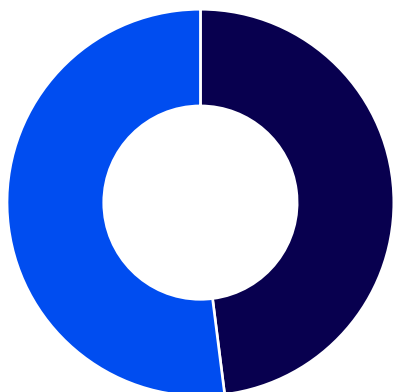
76%

rate the impact of fertility challenges at 7 or higher out of 10

■ Low (0-4) 12% ■ Med-low (5-6) 12%
■ Med-high (7-8) 41% ■ High (9-10) 35%

Psychological support offered by the clinic

% who visited a specialist and received some treatment (not only tests) (n= 107)



48%

were offered psychological support by the clinic during fertility treatment

■ Offered 48% ■ Not offered 52%

74% of women with past infertility consult a doctor, but only 48% start any treatment

Only 14% of women who experienced infertility in the past underwent IVF

**Experienced infertility
in the past**

~265k

Reference population (100%)

Women with primary infertility who never saw a doctor did not go on to have a baby

Consulted a doctor

~200k

74% of women with past infertility

In care

~130k

48% of women with past infertility

Some IVF

~40k

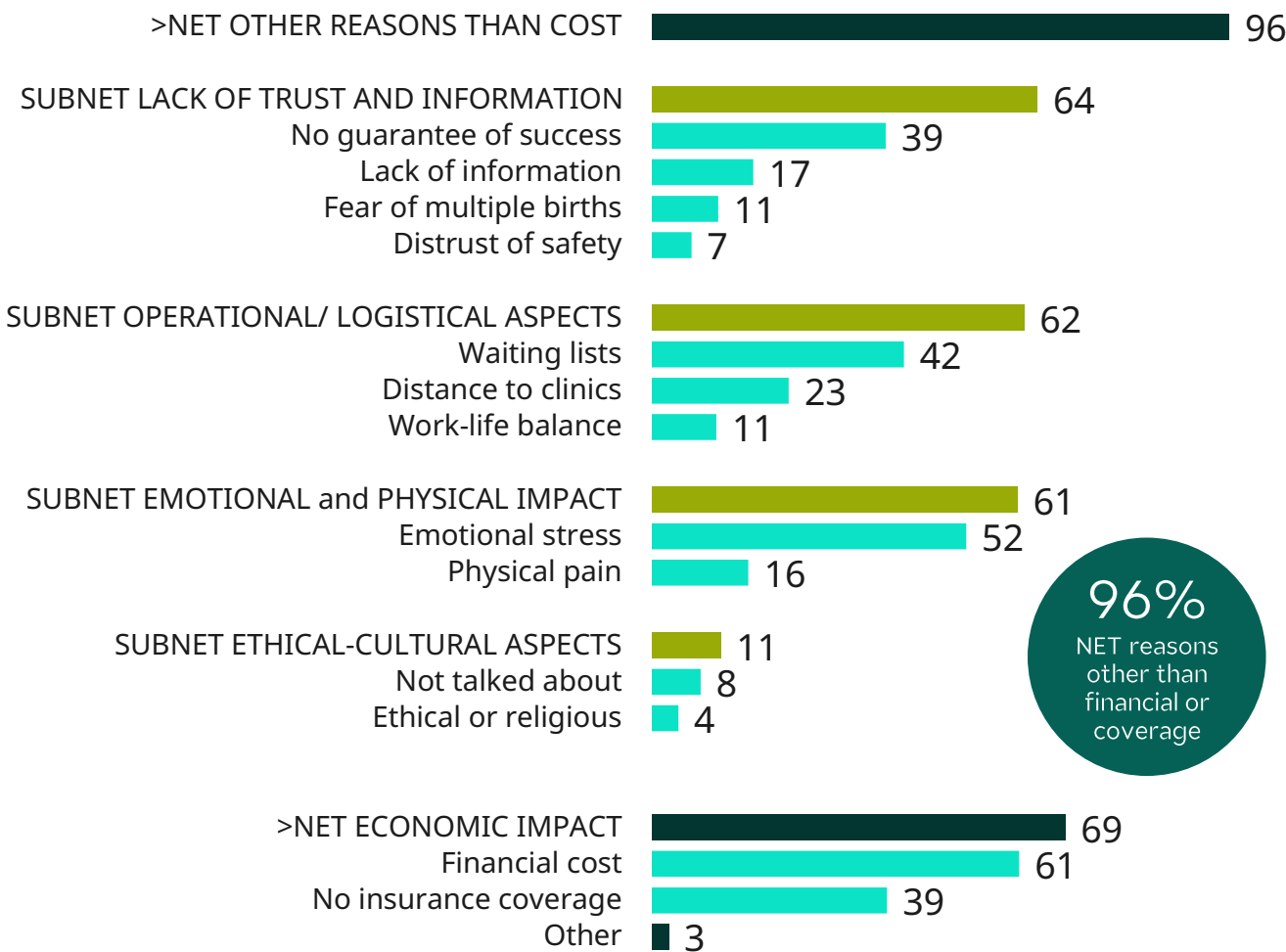
14% of women with past infertility

Fertility treatment: trust and information matter as much as cost

For many women, the decision to pursue fertility treatment is complex. While 69% cite cost as a barrier, an even larger share—96%—point to other reasons, from lack of trust and information to logistical and emotional challenges.

Perceived barriers to treatment

% women who have experienced infertility (n= 155)

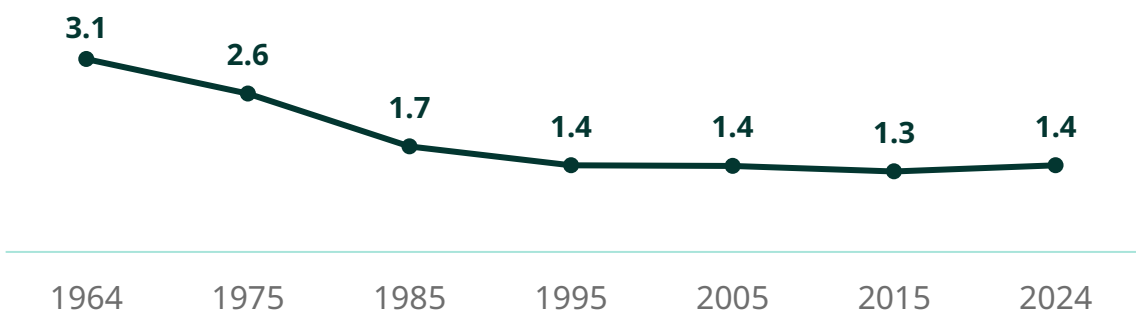


96%
NET reasons
other than
financial or
coverage

Improving access to fertility care may help address the declining birth rate

Infertility is more than a personal issue. The Portuguese fertility rate has been declining, and rising rates of infertility have contributed to this problem. Reducing barriers to fertility care has potential implications for both health care and public policy.

Children per woman in Portugal, 1964–2024



75,000

women in Portugal are experiencing infertility right now
3% of women aged 19–49

Children per woman — today vs if all women experiencing infertility now had a baby

