



Why Are American Women ‘Underbabied’?

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Last month, Dr **Mehmet Oz**, administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, called American women “**underbabied**” in response to **new data** that showed the U.S. at its lowest fertility rate ever: just under 1.6 births per woman, below population-replacement levels.

He joined a storm of politically diverse pundits who have offered their own **explanations** for **women’s reluctance** to have more children. These include women’s education and employment and consequent “woke” values; the widespread availability of contraception and abortion; exaggerated faith in egg freezing and IVF as solutions; fertility-damaging environmental exposures and poor health; anxiety about the climate, economic, political, and social unraveling; and even social isolation fueled by smartphones.