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## Number of Japanese children at record low – 8th May, 2018

### Level 4

Japan has its fewest number of children since records began. There were 170,000 fewer children in March 2018 than in March 2017. Japan's government issued a report showing the statistics. The number of children aged 14 or under dropped for the 37th year in a row. There was also a record low of 12.3 per cent in the ratio of children to the whole population. This ratio is the lowest among countries with a population of over 40 million.

Japan's prime minister has taken action to encourage lower-income families to have more children. However, these have not worked so well. Furthermore, fewer Japanese people are getting married. Statisticians say this is a "ticking time-bomb". The number of annual births in 2016 fell below one million for the first time since records began in 1899. By 2050, Japan will have 23 per cent fewer citizens. This means an aging society and a reducing workforce.

### Level 5

There are the fewest number of children in Japan since records began. There were 170,000 fewer children in the year ending March 2018 than in the previous year. Japan's government issued a report showing the falling numbers. According to the statistics, the number of children aged 14 or under dropped for the 37th consecutive year. There was also a record low of 12.3 per cent in the ratio of children to the overall population. This was the 44th year of decline in a row. This ratio is the lowest among countries with a population of 40 million or more.

Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has tried to address the country's dwindling birth rate. He introduced measures to encourage lower-income families to have more children. However, these have had little success. This is coupled with the fact that fewer Japanese people are getting married. Demographers say this is a "ticking time-bomb". The number of annual births in 2016 fell below one million for the first time since records began in 1899. By 2050, Japan will have 23 per cent fewer citizens. This means an aging society and a greatly reduced workforce.

### Level 6

The number of children in Japan has fallen to its lowest number since records began. There were 170,000 fewer children in Japan at the end of March 2018 than there were a year earlier. Japan's Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications issued a report on Friday showing the falling numbers of children. According to the statistics, the number of children aged 14 or under dropped for the 37th consecutive year. There was another record fall in the ratio of children to the overall Japanese population. This dropped to a new record low of 12.3 per cent and was the 44th year of decline in a row. This ratio is the lowest among countries in the world with a population of 40 million or more.

Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has been trying to address the country's dwindling birth rate. He has introduced several measures to encourage lower-income families to have bigger families. However, these measures seem to be having little success. This is coupled with the fact that fewer Japanese people are getting married, which demographers say is a "ticking time-bomb" for Japan. The number of annual births in 2016 fell below one million for the first time since the government began collecting data in 1899. Japanese demographers predict that by 2050, Japan will have 23 per cent fewer citizens. This means a rapidly aging society and a greatly diminishing workforce.