

Family barometer questionnaire 2023 – Family policy and childbearing desires

NOTE: This is not an official translation

This questionnaire concerns your outlooks on different life situations and family political wishes. The mandator of the questionnaire is Väestöliitto. It is an independent non-governmental organization which works for wellbeing of the families and the whole population. The results are used in research and family political affection during the parliamentary election. The results will be published in Väestöliitto's Family Barometer.

Background variables (from the study executor, background information of the panels)

Sociodemographic factors, such as:

Gender

Age

Mother tongue

(Mother tongue of the household)

Marital status

Life situation

Size of the household

Children in the household

Ages of the children who live in the household

Grand children

(Type of residency)

Ownership of the apartment

Countryside/city

City habitant/rural habitant

Social class

Education

Personal income

Income of the household

Economic situation

Occupational group

Job title

Frequency of the Internet use

Frequency of mobile network use

Party affiliation/ which party would you vote for now

Party affiliation/ which party did you vote for before

Approach to politics

K1 Gender

1 Woman

2 Man

3 Other

4 I don't want to answer

K2 Age

K3 Municipality of residence

K4 Year of birth ____

K5 Main occupation

1 Employee (Full time)

2 Employee (Part time)

3 Freelancer/entrepreneur

X Grant recipient

4 Unemployed

5 Student

6 Family leave (maternity-, paternity-, parental leave, childcare leave)

7 Retired or on disability pension

8 Other

K6 Are you in a relationship at the moment?

1 Yes, I live with my spouse or partner

2 Yes, I don't live with my spouse or partner

3 No

/FILTER: IF IN A RELATIONSHIP (In the question K6 option 1 or 2)

K7 Year of birth of your spouse or partner _____

If you have multiple partners, answer by thinking of one of them

K7b Gender of your spouse or partner

If you have multiple partners, answer by thinking of one of them

Man/Woman/Other

FILTER OFF/

K8 How many underage children live in the same household with you?

By living together with children we mean that the child lives all the time or occasionally with you regardless where the child is registered to live.

(IF YOU DO NOT HAVE ANY UNDERAGE CHILDREN LIVING WITH YOU, MARK 0)

____ unit.

K9 How many children of your own do you have over all, if you count in children who have reached adulthood?

Count in the children who have possibly moved out from home or live elsewhere than in your household.

(IF YOU DO NOT HAVE CHILDREN, MARK 0)

I have ____ children over all

/FILTER: IF YOU HAVE OWN CHILDREN (something else than 0 or “missing” in the question K6)

K10 How old is your youngest child?

MARK SEPERATELY FULL YEARS AND MONTHS

(IF YOUR YOUNGEST CHILD IS UNDER ONE YEAR OLD, MARK IN THE YEARS 0)

_____years

_____months

FILTER OFF/

/FILTER: IF CHILDREN IN THE HOUSEHOLD (K6<0)

K11 Do you live in a blended family?

In a blended family all the children in the family are not shared by both partners(??) By living together with the children we mean that the child lives with you all the time or occasionally.

1 No

2 Yes, I live together with my partner and my own children

3 Yes, I live together with my partner and his/her children

4 Yes, I live with my partner and both of our or our own children

FILTER OFF/

Next we ask your outlooks on family benefits and services.

K12 Where taxes should be targeted, if they are targeted especially to support families?

Select THREE factors that are the most important for you.

ROTATING 1-10

1 Children's day care services

2 Schools

- 3 Children's healthcare
- 4 Raising child benefit
- 5 Raising home care allowance
- 6 Supporting part time work of the parents of small children
- 7 Tax deduction targeted to families
- 8 Supporting children's hobbies
- 9 Increasing flexibility of family leaves so that integrating freetime and work would be easier
- 10 Strengthening child care services (other than day care) or support network
- 11 None of these options
- 12 Something else, what_____
- 13 I don't know or have no opinion

K13 Child benefit is 95-183 euros / child depending on the amount of children. What do you think of this rate?

- 1 Child benefit should be higher for everyone
- 2 Current rate is adequate
- 3 Child benefit should be lower for everyone
- 4 Child benefit should be scaled by the income so that it lowers if the family has higher income
- 5 I don't know or have no opinion

K14 How important are these measures concerning families in your opinion?

- OPTIONS
- 1 Very important
 - 2 Not that important
 - 3 Not important at all
 - 4 I don't know or have no opinion

/ROTATING SUBJECTS/

- Flexible working time for the parents of small children
- More and better possibilities for part time jobs for the parents of small children
- Income tax deduction for people who have dependant children
- Extending child benefit until the child turns 18 years (now until the child is 17 years old)
- Extending family allowance to 90% from former income (now max 70%)

- Extending child benefit noticeably (For example 90 euros more from each child, now child benefit is 95-183 €/child)
- Tax deduction for those who have their first child before turning 25 years
- Supporting housing of the families
- Extending home care allowance until the child starts school
- Raising the home care allowance for the person who takes care of the child at home (now about 343 euros/month per one under 3 years old child)
- Separate child benefit of 200 euros for disadvantaged families
- Childlessness-/fertility treatments would be cheaper and more easily accessible
- Strengthening services concerning divorce situations

K15 What do you think of the following claims?

- OPTIONS
- 1 Completely agree
 - 2 Somewhat agree
 - 3 Somewhat disagree
 - 4 Totally disagree
 - 5 I don't know or have no opinion

ROTATING CLAIMS

- Family is a very central part of my life
- Only children make a relationship a family
- Own children are a requirement for a happy life
- Most of my life ambitions are related to work

Next we ask your opinions on different family benefits.

Family leaves renewed 1.8.2022. Along the renewal there will be changes in the duration of the parental leave and division of the leave between the parents.

K16a What do you think of the renewed duration of the parental leave?

Renewed parental leave can last maximum of 320 weekdays. The contingent can be shared in half between the parents (160+160) or it is possible to give from the contingent to the other parent, the spouse, child's other parent's spouse or other caregiver maximum of 63 weekdays. In single parent households the parent gets all the 320 days to use.

If all the parental leave days are used, the child is a bit over one year old when the parental leave ends. Before the renewal the child was approximately 10 months old when the parental leave ended.

- 1 Parental leave should be even longer
- 2 Among the renewal the length is adequate
- 3 Parental leave should be shorter
- 4 Parental leave should be abolished
- 5 I don't know or have no opinion

K16b What do you think of that among the renewal the leave splits in half between the parents or so that maximum of 63 days can be given to the other parent, the spouse, child's other parent's spouse or other care giver?

If only one of the parents uses the maximum of the parental leave days, the child is same age when the parental leave ends as in the old parental leave model (which is approximately 10 months).

- 1 The leaves should be divided in half, without the possibility to give away days to another care giver
- 2 The renewed model is good
- 3 It should be possible to give away more parental leave days from your own family leave contingent to the other caregiver
- 4 Families should be able to decide independently how to split the parental leave days
- 5 I don't know or have no opinion

K17 What do you think of the level of the parental allowance?

During the parental leave the earnings-linked family allowance is payed and the compensation is max. 70% of the salary leading to parental leave.

- 1 The parental allowance should be higher
- 2 Current level is adequate
- 3 The parental allowance should be lower
- 4 The parental allowance should be abolished
- 5 I don't know or have no opinion

K18a What do you think of the amount of home care allowance?

The reference level (home care allowance) is currently 343 euros per one under three year old child, if the parents choose home care instead of day care.

- 1 Home care allowance should be higher
- 2 Current level is adequate
- 3 Home care allowance should be lower
- 4 Home care allowance should be abolished
- 5 I don't know or have no opinion

K18b What do you think of the duration of home care leave?

Home care leave starts after family leave and continues until the child turns 3 years if there's no appointed public day care position for the child.

- 1 Home care leave should be longer
- 2 The duration of the home care leave is adequate
- 3 Home care leave should be shorter
- 4 Home care leave should be abolished
- 5 I don't know or have no opinion

/FILTER (K19a-c): IF UNDERAGE CHILDREN

K19a How long would you want to/would have wanted to take care of your youngest child at home?

- 1 I'm planning to stay/I stayed shorter time than I want/would have wanted
- 2 I'm planning to stay/I stayed longer time than I want/would have wanted
- 3 I stayed on family leave as long as I wanted to
- 4 I don't know or have no opinion

FILTER: IF SHORTER TIME THAN WOULD HAVE WANTED (Option 1 in the question K19a)

K19b What is or was the most important reason for staying at home on family leave shorter time than you would have wanted?

FILTER: IF LONGER TIME THAN WOULD HAVE WANTED (Option 2 in the question k19a)

K19c What is or was the most important reason for staying at home on family leave longer time than you would have wanted?

FILTER OFF/

Along the family leave renewal employed parents can spend earnings-linked family leave in as many periods as they wish before the child turns 2 years old.

In addition, the flexibility to combine part-time job and parental leave has increased after the renewal. Part-time workday consumes half of one parental leave day whereupon the leave can last correspondingly longer.

K20 In your opinion, are the flexibilities executed along the renewal adequate?

- 1 There should be more flexibilities
- 2 Along the renewal there are enough flexibilities
- 3 There should be less flexibilities
- 4 I don't know or have no opinion

/FILTER (K18): IF UNDERAGE CHILDREN IN THE HOUSEHOLD (IF K8>0))

K21 Have you had to compromise your own or the family's following expenditure lately?

- OPTIONS
- 1 Yes
 - 2 No
 - 3 I don't know or have no opinion

ROTATING SUBJECTS

- Children's hobbies
- Children's clothing
- Household's necessities such as food or medicines
- Family's trips
- Adult's hobbies or own expenditure

- Fixing the house or belongings

FILTER OFF/

According to research fathers have spent approximately ten percent of the possible parental leaves.

K22 What would encourage fathers to spend more time on parental leave? Select the option that looks best to you.

/ROTATING SUBJECTS/

- 1 Extending parental leave until the child turns 18 months (now approx. 13 months)
- 2 Raising the parental allowance to approx. 90 percent of the foregoing income (now approx. 70%)
- 3 By encouraging employers' positive attitude towards fathers' family leaves
- 4 Reducing the parental leave days that are possible to shift to the other parent
- 5 Improving part time work conditions of fathers of small children
- 6 By giving tax deductions to the families out of each family leave month fathers spend
- 7 By talking favorably about family leaves spent by fathers in the public discussion
- 8 Improval of mothers' work market position so that it's easier for the father to stay at home
- 9 There's no need to improve the family leaves of fathers
- 10 I don't know or have no opinion

K23 It has been proposed that other family leaves should be expanded so that they would concern also other relatives. What do you think of the following suggestions?

Options: 1 Totally agree, 2 Disagree, 3 I don't know or have no opinion

- a. Other close relatives than the parents of the child could spend home care leave if they're taking care of the child. For example employed grandparents would be entitled for home care leave.
- b. Home care leave should be admitted to those employed, who take care of their own aging parents.

K24 At what age the child is ready for care outside of home (kindergarten, family day care etc.)?

____y____m

K25 How in your opinion the government has succeeded in improving the wellbeing of the families and children in Finland? Evaluate each subject below separately.

OPTIONS 1 Yes

2 No

3 I don't know or have no opinion

/ROTATING CLAIMS/

- The government supports families adequately
- The separation of the families in fortunate and disadvantaged has increased
- Gender equality has been supported already too much
- The support of the families has been inconsistent and off-centre
- For the most part succeeded, but improvements are needed

K26 What in your opinion is an especially important target of correction to improve the wellbeing of the families?

OPEN ANSWER: _____

Lastly we ask your opinions on childbearing and parenthood.

K27 What is or would have been your own ideal number of children?

_____ children

K28a What in your opinion is the most adequate age for a woman to become a mother?

_____ years

HOW IS THIS DIFFERENT FROM MY PLANNED AGE?

K28b What in your opinion is the most adequate age for a man to become a father?

_____ years

K29 Are you planning to have children or more children?

1 Yes, one day in the future

2 Yes, me or my spouse is trying to get pregnant or is pregnant

3 No I'm not

4 I don't know or have no opinion

/FILTER IF K26 1 or 2 or 4 (Yes in the future or is trying to or is pregnant or I don't know)

K30 How much would you wish to have a child/children?

Scale 0-10 (not at all – extremely a lot)

FILTER OFF/

K31 If you are not planning to have children or having children doesn't feel current right now, which following subjects affect this?

/ROTATING CLAIMS/

- OPTIONS
- 1 Affects a lot
 - 2 Somewhat affects
 - 3 Affects a bit
 - 4 Doesn't affect at all
 - 5 I don't know or have no opinion
 - 6 Doesn't concern me

- I already have the number of children I want
- I don't want to have children overall
- I don't have a suitable partner
- My partner doesn't want to have children
- I want to advance in my job or my career
- My work situation is unstable
- My spouse's work situation is unstable
- My own or my family's economic situation prevents
- My own or spouse's unfinished studies
- My own or spouse's health prevents
- Insufficient support from society
- Arranging child care would be difficult

- Current apartment is too small
- Problems in relationship
- The youngest child is still too young
- I'm still too young or don't feel like I'm mature enough
- I want to do other things that interest me
- Currently no interest of having children in my relationship
- Right now, I wouldn't want a break in my career caused by a family leave
- Combining work and taking care of a small child would be difficult
- I/we can't have (more) own kids
- Experiences of previous pregnancy cause worry or fear of childbirth
- I would have to give up my current lifestyle
- I don't like children
- I don't think I'm suitable for parenting
- I don't want to be tied to small children (anymore)
- I'm or my spouse is too old
- Worry of carbon footprint of a new baby
- Worry of the future of own child because of the climate change

FILTER OFF/

K32a Have your wishes concerning the number of children changed because of covid-19 pandemic?

- 1 No they haven't
- 2 Yes, it increased my wish to have a child / more children
- 3 Yes, it decreased my wish to have a child / more children
- 4 I don't know / I don't want to answer

/FILTER If wishes changed

K32b You answered that your wishes concerning the number of children have changed because of covid-19 pandemic. Would you like to tell more? _____

K33a Has covid-19 pandemic affected the decision when you had or are planning to have (more) children?

- 1 No it hasn't affected
- 2 Yes, it brought forward having children or wishes concerning child bearing in my life

3 Yes, now I wish to have children later or never

3 Some other way

4 I don't know / I don't want to answer

/FILTER If affected (K33a 2, 3 or 4)

K33b You answered that covid-19 pandemic has affected the decision when you had or are planning to have (more) children. Would you like to tell more? _____

FILTER OFF/

K34a Has the war in Ukraine that started this year and the changed security policy situation affected your plans of having children?

1 No it hasn't affected

2 Yes, it increased the number of children I wish for / my wish to have a child/children

3 Yes, it decreased my wish to have a child

4 Other

5 I don't know / want to answer

/FILTER If affected (K34a 2, 3 or 4)

K34b You answered that the war in Ukraine that started this year and the changed security policy has affected your plans of having children. Would you like to tell more? _____

FILTER OFF/

K35a Have you felt a strong desire to have a child ("baby fever")? VCX

1 No I haven't

2 Yes I have, 1-3 times during my life

3 Yes I have, multiple times during my life

/FILTER (K35b and c): IF YES (K35a = 2 or 3)

K35b Did you have a child because of this desire? VCY

- 1 Yes I did
- 2 No I didn't

K35c At which point of your life did you feel a strong desire to have a child? VCZ01-13

- 1 I have wanted children since my adolescence
- 2 Newly fallen in love
- 3 When my friend had children
- 4 When my relative had children
- X When I got to know my partner's children
- 5 When I or my partner was trying to get pregnant
- 6 As a consequence of a pregnancy, imaginary pregnancy, miscarriage or abortion
- 7 After having my first child
- 8 After having my second or the following children
- 9 During a life crisis
- 10 Not in any specific point of life
- 11 Other situation, what?

FILTER OFF/

/FILTER (K36a and b): IF UNDERAGE CHILDREN (K10 years less than 19)

K36a Many factors affect the decision of having children. Which factors felt especially important to you when you had your first child? You can select all the options that feel right for you. If you have multiple children, describe your thoughts concerning your first child.

Behind having your first child was...

ROTATING 1-8

- 1 Long time wish to have a child / multiple children

- 2 I wanted a sibling or a play mate for my older children
- 3 I had strong desire to have a child
- 4 My spouse had a strong desire to have a child
- 5 I couldn't decide, but my age or the age of my spouse started approaching the end of the fertile period
- 6 The change in my life caused by covid-19 pandemic
- 7 I or my spouse wanted a break in the life that the family leave offers
- 8 Having children is part of my values or religion
- 9 Something else
- 10 I don't know or have no opinion

K36b Which aspects felt especially difficult or worried you when your first child was born? You can select all the options that feel right for you.

When my first child was born, I was worried about the following aspects...

ROTATING 1-16

- 1 The economy of the family
- 2 Work and study opportunities as a parent of a young child
- 3 My health or the health of my partner
- 4 How staying away from work would affect my return to work or my employment
- 5 My own or my spouse's ability to cope with the workload
- 6 That the relatives and other close friends wouldn't help us enough with the children
- 7 The change by covid-19 pandemic that affected the pregnancy and the baby's environment
- 8 The consequences of the war in Ukraine
- 9 I was afraid that my spouse wouldn't take part in taking care of the child enough
- 10 The impact of the child to our relationship
- 11 A conflict had arisen that the other one of us wanted to have a child more than the other
- 12 There wouldn't be enough time for the older children
- 13 I was worried of the health of the child
- 14 I would have to give up my hobbies and other activities
- 15 I was worried about giving birth and the effects of it to the baby's or my own wellbeing

16 The instability of the future caused by the climate crisis, disappearance of the biodiversity or environmental problems

17 Something else

18 I don't know or have no opinion

FILTER OFF/

K37 More and more Finns postpone having children or don't have children at all. What in your opinion causes this?

- OPTIONS
- 1 Affects a lot
 - 2 Affects somewhat
 - 3 Doesn't affect much
 - 4 Doesn't affect at all
 - 5 I don't know or have no opinion

ROTATING SUBJECTS

- Unemployment and economic instability
- Hard demands of the work life
- Family values aren't important
- Difficulties to find a suitable spouse
- Society doesn't support families enough
- Relatives and friends don't support families enough
- Adolescents want to live free and uncommitted
- The future of the world seems too unsafe