

**MARRIAGE TRENDS IN CHINA:  
AN UPDATE IN 2024**

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*EAI Background Brief No. 1766*

Date of Publication: 2 May 2024

## Synopsis in English, [Chinese](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#)

The trends in singlehood and non-procreation in China reveal a complex interplay of socio-economic factors and cultural shifts. Declining marriage rates and birth rates, coupled with an ageing population, pose significant challenges to China's demographic landscape and economic future. Economic insecurity, rising property prices and changing societal norms contribute to the reluctance to marry and have children among young Chinese adults. Government initiatives aimed at promoting marriage and childbirth include financial incentives and policy adjustments, but they face resistance and criticism from segments of society. Traditional beliefs and superstitions surrounding marriage are also subject to debate and policy consideration. Overall, while there was a temporary increase in marriages in 2023, China is likely to continue on a trajectory towards a fast-ageing society with decreasing marriage rates and low fertility in the long term. Meanwhile, market forces have capitalised on the rise of singlehood, leading to the emergence of a "singles' economy" catering to the needs and preferences of unmarried individuals.

### ***Chinese:***

#### **中国的婚姻趋势：2024 年更新**

中国单身和不生育的趋势揭示了社会经济因素和文化变迁之间复杂的相互作用。结婚率和出生率下降，加上人口老龄化，对中国的人口结构和经济未来构成了重大挑战。经济不安全、房价上涨和社会规范变化导致中国年轻人不愿结婚生子。政府旨在促进婚姻和生育的举措包括财政激励和政策调整，但遭到社会各界的抵制和批评。有关婚姻的传统信仰和迷信也受到争论和政策考虑。总体而言，虽然 2023 年结婚人数会暂时增加，但从长远来看，中国可能会继续走上快速老龄化社会、结婚率下降和生育率低的轨道。与此同时，市场力量利用了单身的兴起，导致了迎合未婚个人需求和偏好的“单身经济”的出现。

### ***French:***

#### **TENDANCES DU MARIAGE EN CHINE : UNE MISE À JOUR EN 2024**

Les tendances au célibat et à la non-procréation en Chine révèlent une interaction complexe de facteurs socio-économiques et de changements culturels. La baisse des taux de nuptialité et des taux de natalité, associée au vieillissement de la population, pose des défis importants pour le paysage démographique et l'avenir économique de la Chine. L'insécurité économique, la hausse des prix de l'immobilier et l'évolution des normes sociétales contribuent à la réticence des jeunes chinois à se marier et à avoir des enfants. Les initiatives gouvernementales visant à encourager les mariages et les naissances incluent des incitations financières et des ajustements politiques, mais elles se heurtent à la résistance et aux

critiques de certains segments de la société. Les croyances traditionnelles et les superstitions entourant le mariage font également l'objet de débats et de considérations politiques. Dans l'ensemble, même si le nombre de mariages a temporairement augmenté en 2023, la Chine continuera probablement sur la voie d'un vieillissement rapide de sa population, avec une baisse des taux de nuptialité et de fécondité à long terme. Parallèlement, les logiques de marché ont capitalisé sur la montée du célibat, conduisant à l'émergence d'une « économie des célibataires » répondant aux besoins et aux préférences des personnes non mariées.

***Spanish:***

## **TENDENCIAS DEL MATRIMONIO EN CHINA: UNA ACTUALIZACIÓN EN 2024**

Las tendencias hacia la soltería y la no procreación en China revelan una interacción compleja de factores socioeconómicos y cambios culturales. La disminución de las tasas de matrimonio y natalidad, junto con el envejecimiento de la población, plantean desafíos importantes para el panorama demográfico y el futuro económico de China. La inseguridad económica, el aumento de los precios inmobiliarios y los cambios en las normas sociales contribuyen a la renuencia a casarse y tener hijos entre los adultos jóvenes chinos. Las iniciativas gubernamentales destinadas a promover el matrimonio y la natalidad incluyen incentivos financieros y ajustes de políticas, pero enfrentan resistencia y críticas por parte de segmentos de la sociedad. Las creencias y supersticiones tradicionales en torno al matrimonio también están sujetas a debate y consideración de políticas. En general, si bien hubo un aumento temporal de los matrimonios en 2023, es probable que China continúe una trayectoria hacia una sociedad que envejece rápidamente con tasas de matrimonio decrecientes y baja fertilidad a largo plazo. Mientras tanto, las fuerzas del mercado han capitalizado el aumento de la soltería, lo que ha llevado al surgimiento de una “economía de solteros” que atiende las necesidades y preferencias de las personas solteras.

## Executive Summary

1. In 2023, more than 50% of Chinese people between 25 and 29 years old remained single, a development that is in line with that of advanced developed countries and societies.
2. The *China Population and Employment Statistics Yearbook 2023* released in December 2023 indicated that of the overall demographics in China, the unmarried rate was 51.3% amongst the 25–29 year-olds, 18.4% for those aged 30-34 and 8% for those aged 35–39.
3. Chinese people are also delaying marriage; the average age of couples registering for marriage increased from below 24 years of age in 2013 to over 30 in the latest figures available as at January 2024.
4. The Chinese singles cite a spectrum of reasons for not getting married, including the general economic slowdown and anxieties with revised property laws that appear advantageous for male ownership.
5. Specific economic reasons include slow salary increments, high costs of living, a challenge to support themselves financially even as singles, difficulties in purchasing a property while rearing kids and exponential hikes in expenditures.
6. Even for rural folks, there are specific socioeconomic challenges as well. For example, rural men in China’s countryside complained that they cannot pay the substantial dowries expected of them traditionally.
7. Due to the fall in marriage rates, even old wives’ tales and superstitions have become subjects of public debates and policy deliberations. Chinese netizens voiced their opposition to superstitious folklore beliefs in January 2024 and petitioned the authorities to act against the “Year of the Widow”, a superstitious belief that getting married in 2024 heralds bad luck.

8. Chinese Premier Li Qiang's government's work report in March 2024 covered a number of fresh measures for promoting childbirth, for instance, enhancing childbirth support policies, fine-tuning parental leave policies and augmenting childcare services to lessen the financial burden of parenthood.
9. Local authorities resorted to propaganda to motivate career women to go back to their hometowns to find mates and bachelors were incentivised monetarily to look for brides to marry before they reach the age of 25.
10. Market forces are not waiting for the outcome of the dragon year. China's "singles' economy" has thrived with consumer products catering to singles like household appliances, experiential dining packages, tailored singles entertainment options and solo traveller packages.