

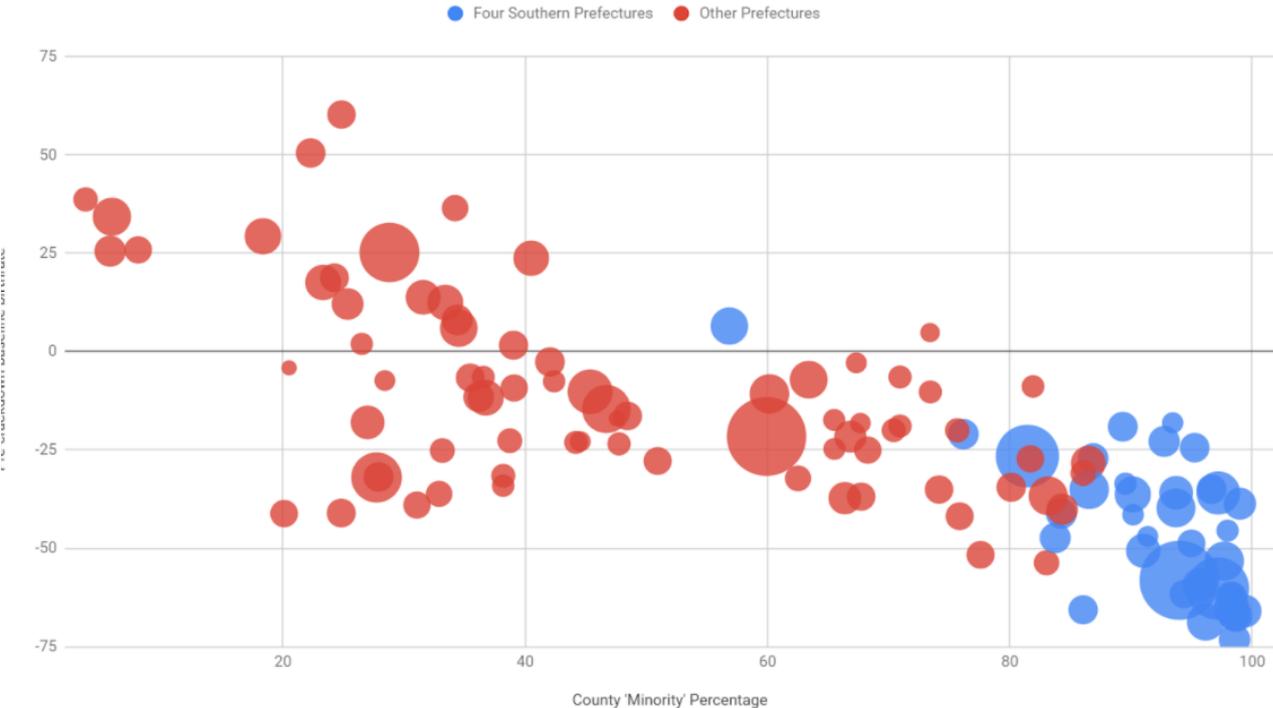
Written Submission to Uyghur Tribunal – Summary

Nathan Ruser – Researcher with the Australian Strategic Policy Institute

The latest report “Family De-planning: The coercive campaign to drive down indigenous birth-rates in Xinjiang” (published in May 2021) examines changing birth-rates in Xinjiang at a fine geographical scale. A summary of the findings are provided here.

In our research we managed to document and record birth-rate statistics for over 100 counties and all prefectures in Xinjiang for every year from 2011-2018. These statistics helped us form a baseline birth-rate figure by averaging the five years from 2011 to 2015, and offered an average ‘pre-crackdown’ birth rate for each county. The statistics published for 2018 show a precipitous decline in the overall birth-rate of Xinjiang, but also a high correlation between the size of that decrease and the proportion of the county’s population which was Uyghur or another indigenous nationality.

This correlation is displayed in the figure below, with the Y-axis representing the decline in a county’s birthrate between the pre-crackdown baseline and 2018.



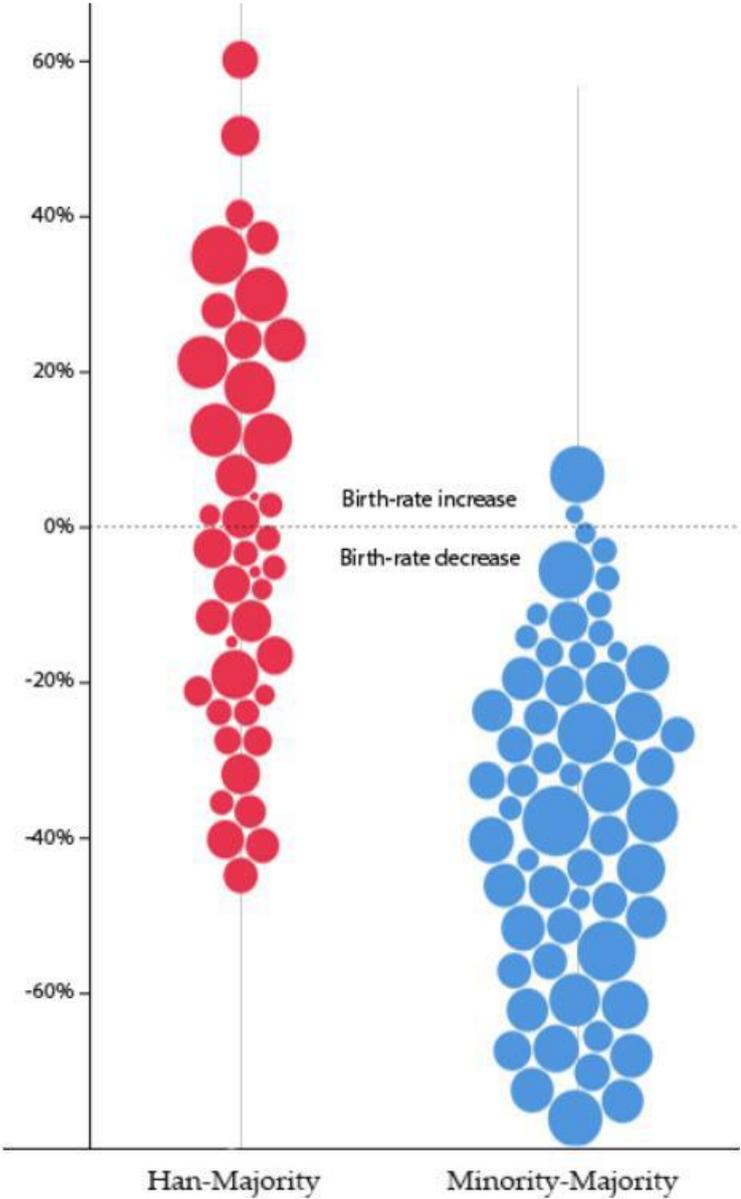
Partial data was scraped from government websites and policy target documents in Xinjiang for 59 counties that showed the 2019 or 2020 birth-rate, these statistics showed a continued decrease in the birth-rate and similar correlation between the decline and an area’s Uyghur population.

We found that almost the entirety of Xinjiang’s decline in birth-rates occurred in counties which were minority-Han populated, and for 2018, the Han-majority counties had a birth-rate that stayed effectively stable since the crackdown, with a total of around 300 more children born in 2018 than would be expected from the 2011-2015 pre-crackdown baseline figures. Meanwhile, counties with a majority population of indigenous nationalities (namely Uyghurs) saw over 160,000 fewer children born than could be expected. Partial data suggests this trend has worsened for 2019 and 2020.

This policy of suppressing birthrates contrasts strongly with national policies that seek the boost the birth-rate and encourage births, with the declining birth-rate across China being seen as a strategic

threat and causing “serious problems”. This is while policies that suppress birth-rates to a much greater degree than nationally are being pursued for indigenous nationalities in Xinjiang.

The systematically discriminatory and coercive (see Zenz’ work) nature of these policies to suppress birth-rates may constitute acts of genocide under Article II section D of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Although, our work does not demonstrate intent and therefore determine whether a genocide more widely is ongoing.



Some examples are below.

In Yengisar County (98.4% Uyghur), 11,878 babies were born in 2015 and only 4,141 babies were born in 2018.

In Hotan County (99.4% Uyghur), 6,993 babies were born in 2015, and only 2,639 in 2018.

In Shihezi City (94.1% Han), 3,688 babies were born in 2015, 4,548 in 2018.

Babies born in 2015 and 2018

