

riage age of women in provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities under the direct jurisdiction of the Central government increased from 21.94 in 1988 by 0.5/year to 22.44 in 1992.<sup>10</sup> The birth rate of women aged 15-19 declined from 22.1 per 1000 to 7.4 per 1000 in 1992.<sup>11</sup>

The decline of the birth rate in the 1990s should not be attributed solely to the success of the central government's fertility policy, because factors causing the birth rate to rise in the 1980s were not yet eliminated, while the number of women aged 20-29 with the highest fertility ability would peak in the 1990s. The gap between the planned population targets and the policy implementation results in 1992 (Table 4) indicated that the mainland people's views regarding reproduction had somewhat changed. Only through voluntary practice of family planning could such results be achieved. Such a change was mainly caused by the gradual deepening of economic reforms and the gradual establishment of a market economy. In other words, although economic reforms were detrimental to population control in the incipient stage, they produced positive effects when being implemented with vigor and persistence.

The deepening of economic reforms and the gradual institutionalization of market-oriented mechanisms also brought about other changes in thinking. In the 1980s, the floating population was regarded as "extra-birth guerrillas" detrimental to the population-control efforts because they could easily escape the government control network. However, in the 1990s, this negative impression was reversed. The

new presumption was that those who were able to leave the countryside to pursue opportunities in cities were the relatively smart and capable persons among rural dwellers, and that after they become part of the floating population in cities, the very heavy pressure to earn a living would lead them to voluntarily control their marriage and reproduction behavior. Based on such a presumption, the Family Planning Commission of Guangdong – a major destination for the floating population – conducted a survey in the mid-1990s regarding the fertility behavior of the floating population in the province. The results show that the floating population married and had a child later than did the non-floating population, and they also had a birth rate lower than that of the latter.<sup>12</sup>

According to an analysis of birth data of the population of 17 cities and towns in 16 provinces and municipalities conducted in 1993 by Tan Xiaoqing of the Population Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences,<sup>13</sup> the average number of births for women who had moved into cities from rural areas was conspicuously lower than that of women who had not moved out of the countryside. This indicates that moving into cities may change people's reproduction behavior and have a positive impact on population control efforts.

The founding of the market economy also produced positive effects on population control. As a result of the development of the market economy, labor markets have sprung up and are flourishing throughout the Chinese mainland, creating keen competition. In order to meet the demands of the market, the exist-

**Table 4. The Population-Control Policy: Targets and Implementation Results (1992)**

	Target	Implementation Results	(1) – (2)
	(1)	(2)	
Birth rate (%)	20.82	18.24	2.58
Natural growth rate of the population (%)	14.33	11.60	2.73
Number of births (Unit: 1 million persons)	24.32	21.19	3.13
Number of population increase (Unit: 1 million persons)	16.74	13.48	3.26
Total population at the end of the year (Unit: 1 million persons)	1,176.67	1,171.71	4.96

Source: Peng Peiyun, "On the Current Population Situation and the Guiding Principles for Family Planning," *Renkou yu jihua shengyu* (Population and family planning) Beijing, 1993; 3: 4.