

WORLD FERTILITY REPORT: 2003



United Nations

Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Population Division

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NOTE

The designations employed in this report and the material presented in it do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

The designations “more developed”, “less developed” and “least developed” for countries, areas or regions are intended for statistical convenience and do not necessarily express a judgement about the stage reached by a particular country or area in the development process.

The term “country” as used in the text of this report also refers, as appropriate, to territories or areas.

This publication has been issued without formal editing.

PREFACE

The twentieth century ushered in profound and continuing changes in childbearing that are driven by and impact on social and economic development. Central to these changes in childbearing are shifts in nuptiality and increase in the use of contraception. Contraceptive use related to reproductive health is an issue of high priority worldwide and Governments' views and policies in this domain are diverse and evolving.

The Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, according to its mandate to increase understanding and awareness among Member States and civil society of issues in the field of population and development, has produced a number of recurrent and ad-hoc reports on these topics. The present report aims at complementing these previous publications with a selection of consistent data on different aspects of reproduction, nuptiality and contraceptive use in most countries of the world.

This volume presents data on fertility, nuptiality, contraceptive use and national policies with respect to childbearing for 192 countries of the world, whose population in 2000 was greater than 100,000. The indicators are selected in such a way as to present a concise picture of reproductive and marital behaviour from both period and cohort perspectives. Contraceptive use and policy data are limited to period perspective. The data are compiled from civil registration, population censuses and nationally representative sample surveys and, in the case of national policies, Governments' responses to United Nations inquiries and other sources. The basic criterion for inclusion of data is its reliability. No attempts were made to estimate missing data.

For each country profile, available data on 24 indicators (some indicators are presented in more detail according to age and sex) are presented for two dates. Reference dates were chosen on the basis of two criteria: the report should contain most recent available data (1995 or later) and that for an earlier date centered on 1970. In cases where data for 1970 are not available, the closest date is selected from within the 1960-1985 period. For the later date, the most recent available estimate since 1986 is selected. As the total fertility rate is the most widely used indicator of fertility, time series of data from different sources are presented for each country in the graphic form. The observed series are supplemented on the graphs with estimates from *World Population Prospects: The 2002 Revision*. For the user's convenience, observed age-specific fertility rates are presented in numeric and graphic formats.

The Population Division gratefully acknowledges the assistance and cooperation of the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the Council of Europe in providing a large part of the data used in this report. Comments, revisions and suggestions on this report are welcome and may be addressed to the Director, Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, New York, 10017, USA, telephone (212) 963-3179, fax (212) 963-2147.

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Explanatory notes

The tables presented in this report make use of the following symbols:

Two dots (..) indicate that data are not available or are not separately reported.

An em dash (—) indicates that the amount is nil or negligible.

A hyphen (-) indicates that the item is not applicable.

A minus sign (-) before a figure indicates a decrease.

A full stop (.) is used to indicate decimals.

Use of a hyphen (-) between years, for example, 1995-2000, signifies the full period involved, from 1 July of the first year to 1 July of the second year.

Numbers and percentages in tables do not necessarily add to totals because of rounding.

Countries and areas are grouped geographically into six major areas: Africa; Asia; Europe; Latin America and the Caribbean; Northern America; and Oceania. Africa and Asia are further divided into Eastern Asia, South-eastern Asia, South Central Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and Northern Africa/Western Asia (considered here as a single region). In addition, for statistical convenience, the regions are classified as belonging to either of two categories: more developed or less developed. The less developed regions include all the regions of Africa, Asia (excluding Japan), and Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia. The more developed regions comprise Australia/New Zealand, Europe, Northern America and Japan.

The following abbreviations have been used:

AHS	Arab-Gulf Family and Child Health Survey
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
CPS	Contraceptive Prevalence Survey
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
EUROSTAT	Statistical Office of the European Communities
FFS	Fertility and Family Survey
FHS	Family Health Survey
KAP	Survey of Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices
MCH	Maternal and Child Health Survey
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (UNICEF)
RHS	Reproductive Health Survey
UNPD	United Nations Population Division
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WFS	World Fertility Survey