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Coverage

England and Wales

Theme

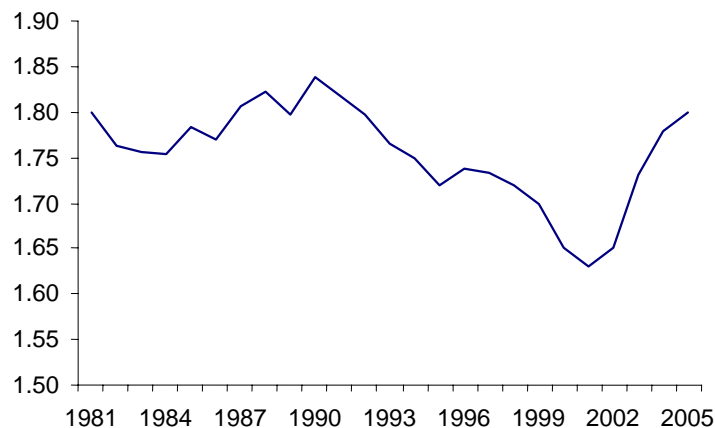
Population and Migration

Fertility rate is highest for 13 years

Provisional fertility rates for 2005 give an average number of 1.80 children per woman in England and Wales, the highest average number since 1992, according to data released today by the Office for National Statistics.

The 2005 total fertility rate (TFR) is up from 1.78 children per woman in 2004, representing a 1 per cent increase, the fourth consecutive annual increase from a low point of 1.63 in 2001.

Total fertility rate (TFR) in England and Wales, 1981-2005



Infant deaths were at an all time low. In 2005, there were 3,248 infant deaths registered giving a rate of 5 deaths per 1000 live births. This is the lowest rate ever recorded in England and Wales.

Other key findings on births and deaths:

Births in 2005

There were 645,835 live births in England and Wales in 2005 compared with 639,721 in 2004, an increase of 1 per cent. The number of live births has been increasing since 2001 and in 2005

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reached levels last seen in 1997.

The general fertility rate (GFR) for 2005 was 58.5 live births per thousand women aged 15-44, a slight increase on 2004 (58.2 live births per thousand women aged 15-44).

The fertility rate for women aged 30 to 34 first overtook that of women aged 25 to 29 in 2004 and in 2005 remained the age group with the highest fertility rate at 100.9 births per thousand women. The average (mean) age of women giving birth increased to 29.5 years, up from 29.4 in 2004.

The long-term rise in the proportion of births outside marriages continued: 42.8 per cent of live births were outside marriage in 2005, compared with 42.2 per cent in 2004. In 1995, 1 in 3 births were outside marriage.

Live births in England and Wales, 2005: area of residence

The highest fertility level among the Government Office Regions of England in 2005, as represented by the TFR was in the West Midlands at 1.91 children per woman. The lowest was in the North East with 1.74.

Among the Strategic Health Authorities in England, North East London had the highest TFR with 2.08 children per woman, while South West London had the lowest (1.62).

In Wales, the highest TFR was in Torfaen Local Health Board (2.07), while the lowest was in Ceredigion (1.38).

Death registrations in England and Wales, 2005

Death rates for males have fallen by nearly a quarter in the ten years to 2005. Since 1995, the age standardised mortality rate has decreased by 23 per cent for males and 16 per cent for females to a (provisional) rate in 2005 of 7,361 per million population for males and 5,188 per million for females. The 2005 rates, for both males and females, are the lowest ever recorded in England and Wales.

The number of deaths registered continues to decrease and is at



its lowest in over 50 years. In 2005, there were 512,993 deaths registered in England and Wales representing a fall of 0.2 per cent from 2004. This is the lowest annual number of death registrations since 1954, when 501,896 deaths were registered. Circulatory diseases are still the most common major cause of death contributing to over a third (35.8 per cent) of all deaths registered in 2005. The highest death rate for both sexes throughout the decade to 2005 was for circulatory diseases, despite the rate for males falling by 37.8 per cent to 2,591 per million population, and the rate for females falling 34.5 per cent to 1,642 per million population since 1995.

Cancer accounted for just over a quarter (26.9 per cent) of all deaths registered in 2005, with a rate of 2,173 per million population for males and 1,568 for females. The rates for cancer have also fallen since 1995 by 18.5 per cent for males and 13 per cent for females.

Death registrations in England and Wales, 2005: area of residence

Among the English regions, and Wales, the North East Government Office Region had the highest level of mortality in 2005 as measured by standardised mortality ratios (or SMRs). In 2005 the SMR in the North East for all persons was 13 per cent above the national level, whilst the lowest was in the South West (8 per cent below the national level).

Among local authorities, mortality levels were highest in Hartlepool (31 per cent above the national level) and lowest in Kensington and Chelsea (34 per cent below the national level). Whilst Kensington and Chelsea has remained the local authority with the lowest SMR since 2003, Hartlepool had the highest SMR for the first time in 2005.

More detailed data for births can be found at:
www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=14408

More detailed data for deaths can be found at:
www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=14409

BACKGROUND NOTES

1. Further statistics on 2005 births will be published on 29 June 2006 as a Report in *Population Trends 124*. This will give numbers of live births, total fertility rates and general fertility rates by mother's usual area of residence.
2. The total fertility rate (TFR) is the average number of children that a woman would bear if the female population experienced the age-specific fertility rates of the calendar year in question throughout their childbearing lifespan. The TFR is a summary measure of current fertility, and changes in timing of births means that it can often be a poor indicator of the actual average number of children women will eventually have. The TFR for 2005 is provisional as it was calculated using the 2004-based population projections for 2005. It will be revised in Autumn 2006 when the 2005 mid-year population estimates are published.
3. The average (mean) age is unstandardised and shows the mean age of the mothers who had births in 2005 and is unadjusted for the age structure of the population.
4. All deaths figures in this release are based on deaths registered in 2005. Statistics on deaths that occurred in 2005 will be published in October 2006.
5. Further statistics on 2005 death registrations will be published in a Report in *Health Statistics Quarterly 30* on 25 May 2006. This publication will give the numbers of deaths registered in England and Wales in 2005 by age and sex, and for selected causes of death. Deaths by area of usual residence will appear in a Report in *Population Trends 124* to be published on 29 June 2006.
6. The age-standardised death rates in this release are directly age-standardised to the European Standard Population, which allows comparisons between populations with different age structures, including between males and females and over time. Age-standardised rates for 2005 in this release are provisional as they were calculated using the 2004-based population projections for 2005. They will be revised in Autumn 2006 when the 2005 mid-year population estimates are published.
7. Standardised Mortality Ratios compare mortality in one population with mortality in a 'standard' population, while allowing for differences in age structure. The ratio is of 'observed' to 'expected' deaths. 'Expected' deaths are the number that would have occurred if the sex and age-specific mortality rates of the standard year had applied to the population of interest. SMRs for males and females separately are calculated using the appropriate sex- and age-specific standard rates.
8. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available from the press office.



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