

# The Rest

## Relationship Statistics

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### FERTILITY

- There were 254,200 births registered in Australia in 2004 representing the largest number of births since 1995.
- Australia's total fertility rate (TFR) in 2004 was 1.77 babies per woman. This is an increase from 1.73 in 2002 (see REST Vol. 4).
- The Northern Territory recorded the highest fertility rate of any state or territory with a rate of 2.24 births per woman, while the ACT had the lowest with just 1.64.
- The trend toward older mothers is continuing. Fertility rates for women aged in their thirties increased in 2004 compared to 2003, while fertility rates for women in their twenties fell.
- The percentage of births registered to women aged 30 years and over increased from 41% of all births to 51% of all births in a period of just 10 years to 2003.
- The fertility rate for women aged 35-39 (at 57.4 babies per 1,000 women) exceeded for the first time ever the rate for women aged 20-24 (at 53.4 babies per 1,000 women).
- The age group with the highest fertility rate in 2004 was women aged 30-34 with 114.4 babies per 1,000 women followed by those aged 25-29 with 102.5 babies per 1,000 women.
- Women aged 25-29 experienced a 26% decline in fertility rate between 1993 and 2003. Women aged 35-39 experienced a 40% increase in the same period.
- The median age for all mothers who gave birth increased from 28.9 in 1993 to 30.5 in 2003.
- 5% of all births in 2004 were recorded to couples where at least one parent was Indigenous.
- Indigenous women had a total fertility rate of 2.11 in 2004.
- The average number of children per couple has decreased significantly over the years. As many as 55% of women aged 40-44 had three or more children in 1981, but by 1996 this percentage had fallen to 38%.
- 13% of women aged 40-44 reported not having ever had a child (2001).
- Among developed countries, Australia's total fertility rate is significantly higher than Italy (1.2), Japan (1.3) and the UK (1.6), but lower than New Zealand (2.0) and the United States (2.1).

**SOURCES:**

*Australian Bureau of Statistics (2005). Births, Australia. ABS Catalogue No.3301.0. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.*

*4102.0 Australian Social Trends (2005). Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics*