

Fertility of American Women: 1994 – Highlights

(Note: All demographic surveys suffer from undercoverage of the population. This undercoverage results from missed housing units and missed persons within sample households. Compared to the level of the 1990 Decennial Census, overall CPS undercoverage is about 8 percent. Undercoverage varies with age, sex, and race. For some groups such as 20 to 29 year old Black males, the undercoverage is as high as 34 percent compared to the Census. The population controls that are used in this survey have been adjusted for undercount in the decennial census and partially corrected for the bias due to undercoverage. However, the final impact of the weighting procedures used by the Census Bureau on the estimates is unknown. The estimates for data beginning in the 1994 CPS are based on population controls using results from the 1990 census brought forward to the survey date. Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race. The information on the Hispanic population shown in this report was collected in the 50 States and the District of Columbia, and does not include residents of Puerto Rico.)

HIGHLIGHTS

- Of the 60.0 million women 15 to 44 years old in June 1994, 3.9 (+ 0.1) million had a child between July 1993 and June 1994. Twenty-six (+2.2) percent of them had their children born out-of-wedlock (tables A and C).
- Over one-half (53 (+1.9) percent) of the women who had a birth in the last year were in the labor force (table H).
- About 15 (+1.4) percent (580,000 +94,000) of the births in 1994 were to foreign-born women (table N).
- Women born in Mexico had high fertility rates (147 (+43.0) births per 1,000) compared with women born in Europe (53 (+ 37) per 1,000) or Asia (58 (+35.0) per 1,000). Fertility rates for women from Europe and Asia were not statistically different from each other.

INTRODUCTION

This report provides detailed statistics on fertility and socioeconomic characteristics of American women 15 to 44 years old. The data were collected in the June 1994 Current Population Survey. This section presents highlights of some of the most important characteristics about current fertility patterns and trends.

Current Fertility

- In both 1990 and 1994, 42 percent of women 15 to 44 years old were childless (table F).
- About 42 percent of the women who had a birth between July 1993 and June 1994 reported that birth as their first, up slightly from 39 percent for the year ending in June 1990 (table 4).¹
- Of the 6.5 million Hispanic women 15 to 44 years old in 1994, 4.0 million reported that they were of Mexican ancestry (table B). The fertility rate for Mexican-American women in 1994 was 111 births per 1,000, a rate about twice as high as for the non-Hispanic population (61 per 1,000). Women of Mexican ancestry averaged 1.6 children ever born, about 0.4 children higher than non-Hispanic women.
- Fertility rates for women of Mexican ancestry were significantly lower among those born in the U.S. (85 per 1,000) compared with those women born in Mexico (143 per 1,000).
- In both 1990 and 1994, 42 percent of women 15 to 44 years old were childless (table F).
- About 42 percent of the women who had a birth between July 1993 and June 1994 reported that birth as their first, up slightly from 39 percent for the year ending in June 1990 (table 4).¹
- Of the 6.5 million Hispanic women 15 to 44 years old in 1994, 4.0 million reported that they were of Mexican ancestry (table B). The fertility rate for Mexican-American women in 1994 was 111 births per 1,000, a rate about twice as high as for the non-Hispanic population (61 per 1,000). Women of Mexican ancestry averaged 1.6 children ever born, about 0.4 children higher than non-Hispanic women.
- Fertility rates for women of Mexican ancestry were significantly lower among those born in the U.S. (85 per 1,000) compared with those women born in Mexico (143 per 1,000).

Out-of-wedlock Childbearing

[Read highlights here](#)[TXT – 8k]

Births to Unmarried Women

- The proportion of children born out-of-wedlock was 26 percent in 1994, not statistically different from the 1990 percent (table C).
- Of all births to Black women in 1994, 66 percent were to unmarried women (women either never married, widowed, or divorced at the survey date); this was more than three times that of White women (19 percent), and more than two times that of Hispanic women (28 percent).

Births to Never-Married Women

- About 38 percent of women 15 to 44 years old in 1994 had never been married (table A). Of these 22.7 million never-married women, 20 percent had given birth to at least one child by the time of the survey (table J).
- About 7 percent of never-married teenagers had borne a child, while among women in their thirties, about 4 out of every 10 had borne a child out-of-wedlock.
- Less than 1 in 2 never-married Black women had had a baby, compared with about 1 in 4 Hispanic women and 1 in 8 White women.

International Comparisons of Out-of-wedlock Childbearing

- Vital statistics data indicate that 30 percent of the births in the United States in 1992 were to unmarried women. Comparable levels were reported in Canada (29 percent), the United Kingdom (31 percent) and France (33 percent) (table K).

- Almost one-half of all births in Denmark and Sweden were born to women outside of marriage. In contrast, only 1 percent of the births to women in Japan in 1992 were born out-of-wedlock.

Labor force Patterns of Women with Infants

- In June of 1994, 53 percent of women 15 to 44 years old who had a child in the preceding 12 months were in the labor force, no change from the rate in 1990 (table H). Of these 2.1 million women, 1.8 million were employed. About 68 percent of these women were employed as full time workers.
- Among mothers with newborn children, 70 percent of mothers who had at least a bachelor's degree were in the labor force, compared with 48 percent who had completed only high school and 34 percent with less than a high school diploma (table I). Among those women in the labor force who gave birth in the last year, approximately 12 percent were living in families whose reported total income was \$75,000 and over. A similar percentage of working women with children under 1 year of age were living in low income families making under \$10,000 a year.

Fertility of Foreign-born Women

- In 1994 there were 6.2 million foreign-born women 15 to 44 years old. The fertility rate for these women was 93 births per 1,000 compared with 62 births per 1,000 native-born women 15 to 44 years old (table N).
- Overall, 15 percent (580,000) of all births in the U.S. in 1994 were to foreign-born women and the majority of these births (503,000) were to women who were not citizens of the United States.
- Women born in Mexico comprised 30 percent of all foreign-born women in the childbearing ages; and had 48 percent of the births of foreign-born women.
- Among foreign-born women, those born in Mexico had the highest fertility rate (147 births per 1,000) compared with 53 births per 1,000 for women born in Europe and 58 births for women born in Asia.²

FOOTNOTES

1/ 1990 data are from the Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 454, table 4.

2/ Fertility rates for women from Europe and Asia were not significantly different from each other.