

## Birth rates

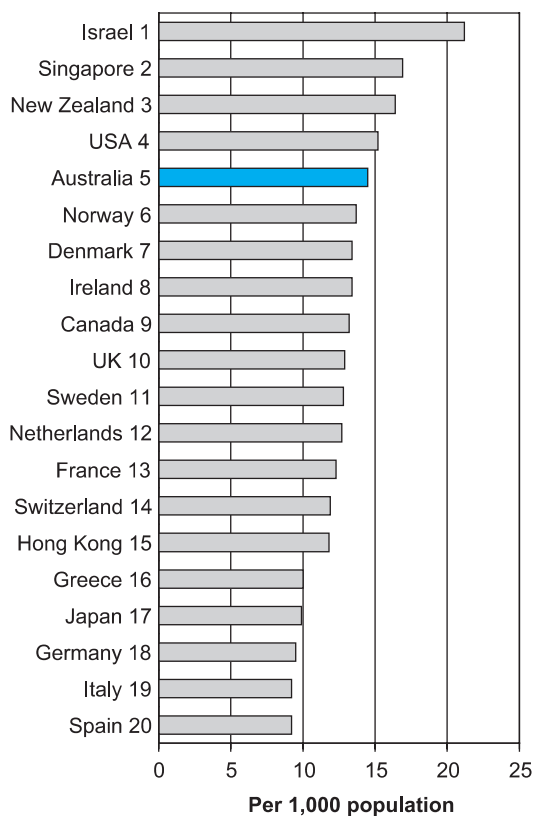


Figure 1: Crude birth rates, 1994

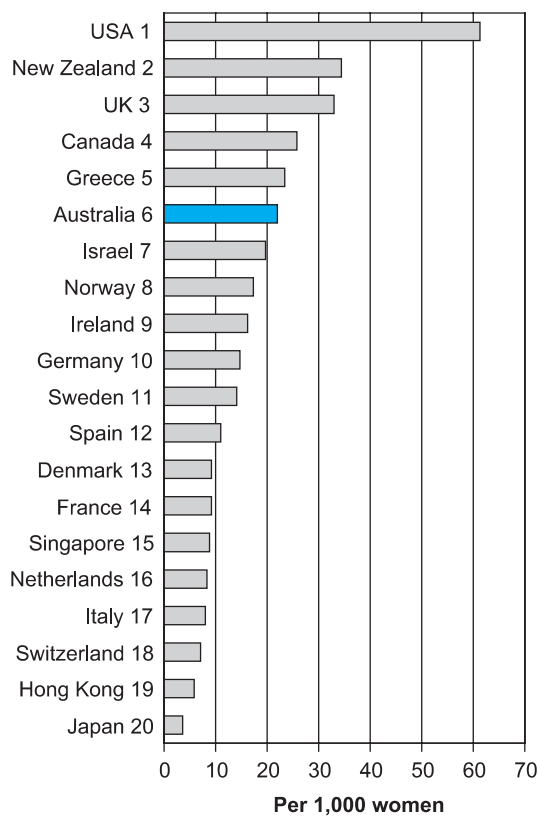


Figure 2: Age-specific birth rates, teenage girls aged 15-19, 1990

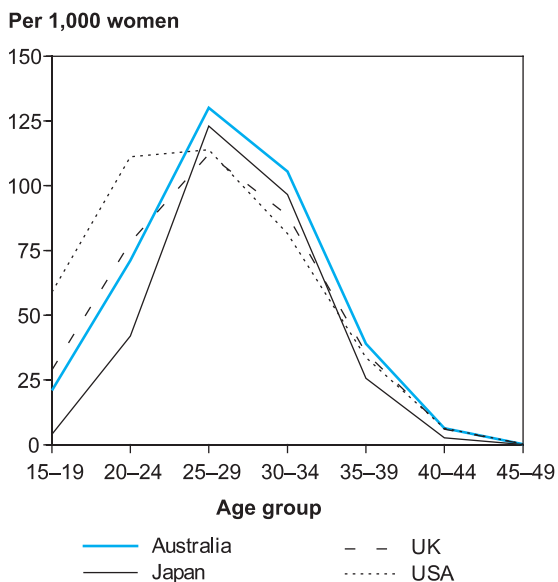


Figure 3: Age-specific birth rates, 1994

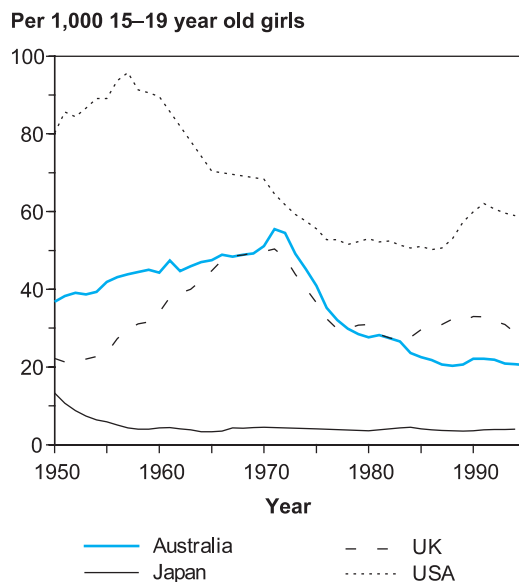


Figure 4: Trends in births to teenage girls aged 15-19, 1950 to 1994

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### Live births, crude birth rate and age-specific birth rates<sup>(a)</sup>

Country	Year	Live births	Crude birth rate	Age of mother (years)						
				15–19	20–24	25–29	30–34	35–39	40–44	45–49
Australia	1994	258,051	14.5	20.7	69.2	126.0	105.1	41.2	6.7	0.3
Canada	1992	398,642	14.0	25.7	75.1	119.4	85.4	28.9	4.2	0.1
Denmark	1994	69,668	13.4	9.3	63.4	141.6	107.0	36.5	5.2	0.2
France	1991	759,056	13.3	9.1	73.2	139.4	93.4	37.0	7.4	0.5
Germany	1994	769,603	9.5	10.1	52.7	85.4	69.9	25.6	4.4	0.3
Greece	1994	103,763	10.0	14.2	67.7	98.8	62.1	23.6	4.5	0.4
Hong Kong	1994	71,646	11.8	6.8	40.8	83.2	79.0	29.9	4.3	0.2
Ireland	1994	47,928	13.4	15.3	49.5	112.1	123.0	58.5	12.6	0.7
Israel	1994	114,543	21.2	18.5	124.9	188.9	151.3	77.9	18.0	1.4
Italy	1991	562,787	9.9	8.0	49.7	90.7	71.8	29.3	5.2	0.2
Japan	1994	1,238,328	9.9	4.0	41.9	123.0	96.6	25.6	2.6	0.1
Netherlands	1994	195,611	12.7	6.9	41.1	111.0	113.8	38.1	4.9	0.3
New Zealand	1992	59,266	17.2	33.8	95.3	142.0	108.5	39.9	6.5	0.3
Norway	1992	60,109	14.0	16.0	85.7	137.5	98.3	35.2	5.3	0.2
Singapore	1994	49,602	16.9	7.6	48.4	136.2	116.0	45.4	7.1	0.1
Spain	1991	395,989	10.1	11.0	46.3	99.7	77.9	27.9	5.8	0.4
Sweden	1994	112,257	12.8	9.7	73.4	140.0	103.0	43.0	7.5	0.3
Switzerland	1994	82,980	11.9	6.0	51.3	115.8	92.2	32.2	4.8	0.1
UK	1994	750,671	12.9	28.8	78.2	112.1	88.5	35.4	6.0	0.3
USA	1994	3,952,767	15.2	58.9	111.1	113.9	81.5	33.7	6.4	0.3

(a) The crude birth rate is the number of live births during the year, per 1,000 of the resident mid-year population. Age-specific birth rates are the live births according to age of mother, per 1,000 of the female resident population of the same age.

United Nations 1979, 1997.

- There were 258,051 live births registered in Australia in 1994—a crude birth rate of 14.5 per 1,000 population. Although at its lowest point ever, this rate is high compared to other developed countries, and was exceeded only by Israel, Singapore, New Zealand and the United States that year (Figure 1). Countries with lower crude birth rates include Spain, Italy, Germany and Japan, all at under 10 births per 1,000 population in 1994.
- The age-specific birth rate is typically the highest for mothers aged 25 to 29 years—in 1994 the Australian rate was 126.0 births per 1,000 women in this age group (Figure 3). This rate, however, is the lowest yet recorded for Australian women. Age-specific birth rates for older women have increased in recent years, reflecting the trend for women to defer child-bearing to later ages (AIHW 1996).
- The age-specific birth rate for teenage mothers (aged 15–19) in 1994 was 20.7 births per 1,000 teenage girls. Australia ranked high for births to teenage mothers—in 1990, sixth among 20 developed nations (Figure 2). The United States rate (58.9 in 1994) was almost twice as high as that for the next highest country—New Zealand (33.8 in 1992). The Japanese rate for teenage pregnancies (4.0 in 1994) was in comparison low.
- In Australia, the birth rate for teenage mothers increased steadily until the early 1970s and then fell away rapidly to stabilise in the mid-1980s (Figure 4). Changing social behaviours, including the increased availability of contraceptives and access to legal abortion, have influenced this trend. The United States and the United Kingdom showed similar patterns for this age group, although the rate peaked 15 years earlier for teenagers in the United States.
- Crude birth rates may be affected by the differing age structures of populations in different countries, making international comparisons problematic. A measure such as the total fertility rate (see following page) overcomes this difficulty.

#### For more information, see:

United Nations 1997. 1995 demographic yearbook. New York: United Nations.