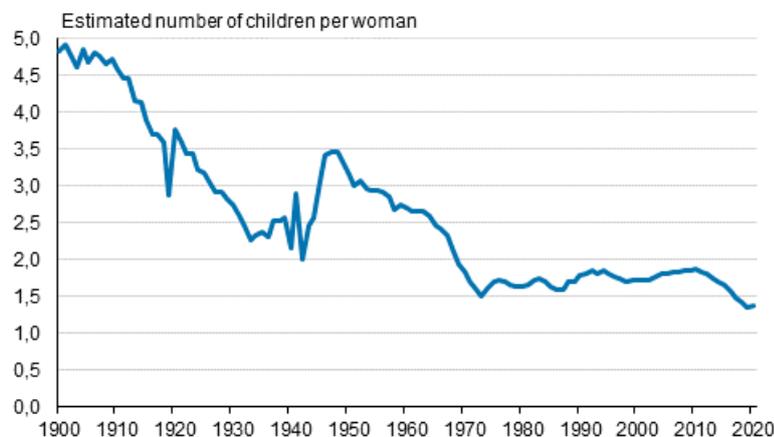


Births 2020

Decrease in birth rate stopped in 2020

According to Statistics Finland's data on population changes, the decrease in the birth rate, which has continued for nine years, halted in 2020. At the birth rate prevailing in 2020, a woman would give birth to an average of 1.37 children, according to the 2019 birth rate 1.35 children. Altogether 344 more first-born children and 441 more second-born children were born than in 2019. Altogether 46,463 children were born, which is 850 children more than in the previous year. In 2019, the number of births still decreased by 1,964 children from the year before.

Total fertility rate in 1900 to 2020



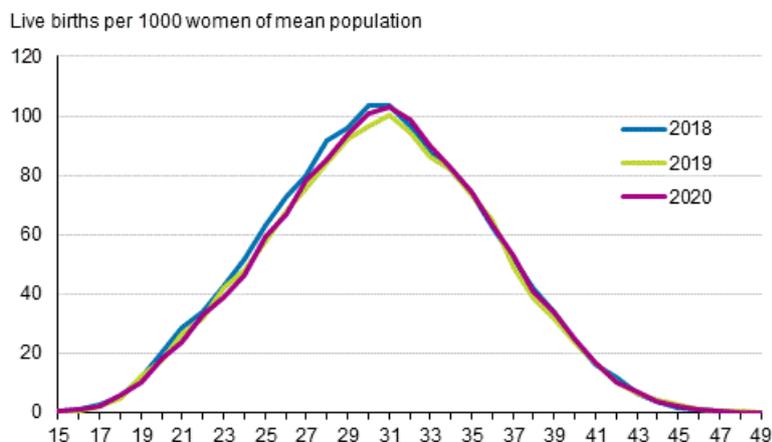
When the number of births is taken as a proportion to the number of women of childbearing age, the birth rate can be examined. The birth rate is commonly measured with the total fertility rate, which indicates how many children a woman would give birth to during her life time if the birth rate remained the same as in the year on which the calculation is based.

In the past decade, the birth rate decreased significantly. The total fertility rate fell from 1.87 children in 2010 to 1.35 children per woman in 2019, which was the lowest ever birth rate in Finland. In 2020, the birth rate rose slightly from this, to 1.37 children per woman.

Examined by age group, the birth rate rose slightly in the 25 to 39 age groups in 2020. The age group-specific fertility rate increased most among women aged 30 to 34. For them, the fertility rate was 95 children per one thousand women in 2020, while in the previous year it was 92 children. The fertility

rate also increased slightly in the 25 to 29 age group and in the 35 to 40 age group. In other age groups, the fertility rate in 2020 remained almost unchanged (those aged 40 to 44 and 45 to 49) or decreased slightly from the year before (those aged 20 to 24 and those aged 20 or under).

Age-specific fertility rates 2018, 2019 and 2020



Rise in the age of first-time parents slowed down slightly

On average, first-time mothers were aged 29.7 years, 0.1 years older than in the previous year. The growth slowed down slightly in 2020, because in 2018 and 2019 the average age rose by 0.2 years per calendar year. In ten years, the mean age at first confinement has risen by 1.4 years. The average age of all women having given birth to a living child also rose by one decimal from the previous year, to 31.3 years. In the past ten years, the average age has risen by 1.2 years (Table).

First-time fathers were, on average, of the same age as in the previous year, 31.6 years, on average. The average age of all men who became fathers was 33.7 years, one tenth more than in the previous year. Not all children born have information on their father in the Population Information System at the time of compiling the statistics. Information on fathers is updated over time. In the statistics for 2020, altogether 96 per cent of children had information about their father.

Birth rate halted with the second, third and fourth children — no increase in the birth rate of first-born children

Although the birth rate halted in 2020, new families with children did not become relatively more common. A total of 344 more first-born children were born than in 2019. When this is proportioned to women of childbearing age without children, it can be seen that no change took place in the birth rate of first-born children. Women’s fertility rate calculated by the number of children for first children remained on level with the previous year in 2020. In all, 42 per cent of all those born in 2020 were first-born children.

By contrast, women’s fertility rate according to the number of children rose slightly for the second, third and fourth children. The fall in total fertility is most strongly explained by the risen birth rate of second children: Women’s fertility rate for second children rose by five per cent. The birth rate of third children rose by two per cent and that of fourth children by eight per cent. Of all those born in 2020, altogether 34 per cent were second children, 14 per cent third children and 5 per cent fourth children.

Birth rate started to rise in 13 regions

Measured by the total fertility rate, the birth rate rose in relative terms most in Päijät-Häme, by 7.2 per cent. It was second highest in North Ostrobothnia, 6.8 per cent, and third highest in Central Ostrobothnia, 5.2 per cent.

In four regions the birth rate continued to fall, but less than in the year before, and in one region the fall rate remained relatively unchanged. Of all regions, the previous year's small rise made a downturn of 6.3 per cent only in South Ostrobothnia.

The birth rate was above the rate for the whole country in ten regions. At the 2020 total fertility rate, the highest number of children per woman would be born in the regions of Ostrobothnia: on average, 1.87 children per woman in Central Ostrobothnia, 1.72 in North Ostrobothnia, 1.66 in Ostrobothnia, and 1.55 in South Ostrobothnia. The lowest numbers of children would be born in South Karelia, an average of 1.27 children per woman, in Pirkanmaa 1.28 and in North Karelia, 1.29 children per woman.

Although the birth rate is in relative terms highest in the regions of Ostrobothnia, in numbers most children are born in Uusimaa, 35 per cent of all births. Correspondingly, 17 per cent of births in the whole country were in the regions of Ostrobothnia in 2019. The total fertility rate was 1.30 in the region of Uusimaa, which is the fifth lowest by regional comparison.

Birth rate highest in Porvoo and lowest in Helsinki and Turku

In municipalities with at least 50,000 inhabitants, the birth rate was highest in Porvoo, where the total fertility rate was 1.56 in the five-year period 2016 to 2020. The second highest rates were found in Espoo and Seinäjoki, 1.54. The figure for the whole country in the five-year period was 1.44.

Respectively, the birth rate in the period 2016 to 2020 was lowest in Helsinki and Turku, where the total fertility rates were 1.16. The rate was 1.18 in Tampere and 1.20 in Joensuu. The birth rates in the above-mentioned municipalities were also among the lowest in a comparison of all municipalities.

Number of live births, total fertility rate and mother's and father's mean age by live births in 2011 to 2020

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Number of live births	59 961	59 493	58 134	57 232	55 472	52 814	50 321	47 577	45 613	46 463
Total fertility rate	1,83	1,80	1,75	1,71	1,65	1,57	1,49	1,41	1,35	1,37
Mother's mean age by all live births	30,3	30,3	30,4	30,5	30,6	30,8	30,9	31,1	31,2	31,3
Mother's mean age by first live birth	28,4	28,5	28,6	28,6	28,8	29,1	29,2	29,4	29,6	29,7
Father's mean age by all live births	32,7	32,8	32,9	32,9	33,1	33,3	33,4	33,5	33,6	33,7
Father's mean age by first live birth	30,5	30,6	30,7	30,7	31,0	31,3	31,5	31,4	31,6	31,6

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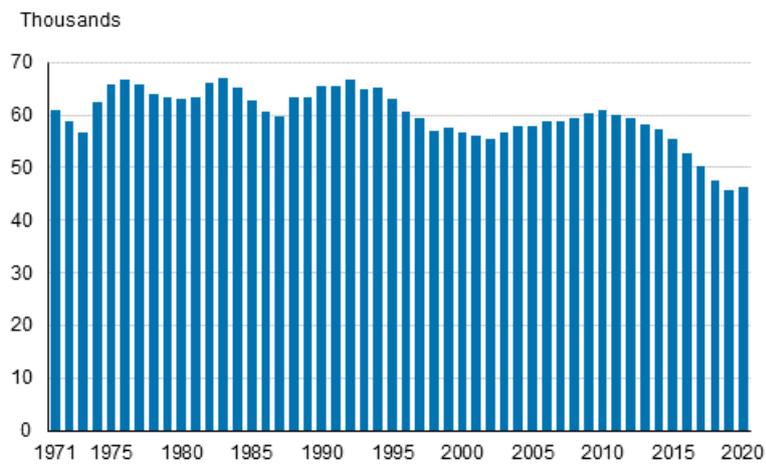
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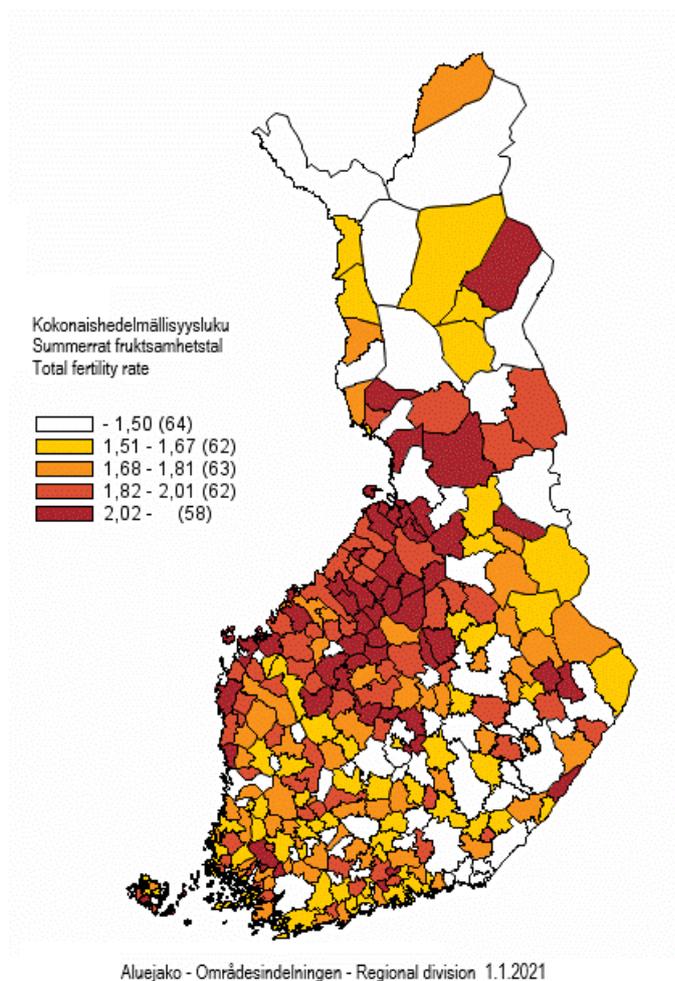
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Appendix figure 1. Live births 1971–2020



Appendix figure 2. Total fertility rate by municipality for the years 2016–2020



Quality description, births 2020

1. Relevance of statistical information

The main source used when producing Finnish population statistics is the Population Information System, which is maintained by the Digital and Population Data Services Agency and the state department of Åland. From 1975 Statistics Finland has obtained population data from the Digital and Population Data Services Agency.

The last population registration was carried out in Finland on 1 January 1989. After that the Population Information System has been updated by notifications of changes. The data stored in the Population Information System are specified in the act on Population Information System and the certificate services of the Digital and Population Data Services Agency (21 August 2009/661). Notifications on population changes for the past year are expected by the last day of January of the following year.

Statistics Finland's function is to compile statistics on conditions in society (Statistics Finland Act of 24 January 1992/48). These also include demographic statistics.

In accordance with the Act on the Municipality of Domicile, the municipality of domicile and the place of residence of individuals are recorded in the Population Information System. The municipality in which a person lives or the one construed by the inhabitant as the municipality of domicile on the grounds of residence, family ties, livelihood or other equivalent circumstances, or to which the inhabitant has close links due to the aforementioned circumstances is deemed the municipality of domicile. (Act on the Municipality of Domicile, 201/1994.) The population registered in the Population Information System is divided into those present and those absent. Those present are permanent residents of Finland, either Finnish nationals or aliens. Those absent are Finnish nationals who when emigrating from the country have reported that they intend to be absent from Finland for more than one year, with the exception of Finnish nationals who are diplomats and those working in development co-operation (Act on the Municipality of Domicile, 201/1994.) Only changes in the population resident in Finland are taken into account when compiling statistics on vital events. Persons moving to Finland from abroad are classified in the population statistics if the place of residence they have declared as their municipality of domicile is later confirmed as their place of residence.

Births

'Liveborn' is the term for a newborn who breaths or shows other signs of life after birth. Only liveborn children of women permanently resident in Finland are taken into account in the population statistics.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) definition, 'stillborn' is the term for a newborn with a birth weight of at least 500 g or, if the birth weight is not available, a newborn born dead after a pregnancy lasting 22 weeks or more. The WHO definition has been in use since 1987. From the 2003 vital statistics onwards, the same national definition is used as in the cause-of-death statistics: 'stillborn' is the term for a newborn with a birth weight of at least 500 g, or a newborn born dead after a pregnancy lasting 22 weeks or more.

Children are classified according to family status as legitimate or illegitimate. A child born in wedlock is legitimate. A widow can give birth to a legitimate child if the pregnancy began while still married. A child born out of wedlock is illegitimate. Cases where the mother has married the child's father after the child's birth are also considered illegitimate in these statistics. According to law, such children only become legitimate as of the date when their parents enter into a marriage contract with each other. In this vital statistics publication the child's family status is primarily given by the mother's marital status, that is, whether the mother was married or not. Unmarried, widowed and divorced women, and women widowed after a registered partnership, separated from a dissolved registered partnership or living in a registered partnership are classified as not being married at the time of the child's birth.

The new Maternity Act entered into force on 1 April 2019, according to which a child can have two mothers (253/2018). The woman having given birth to a child is the biological mother of the child. The child's other parent can be the father or the child can have two mothers. The woman who consented to the fertility

treatment in agreement with the birth mother, as a result of which the child was born, can be established as the second mother of the child.

The birth order is determined in two ways: either all live births to the mother are taken into account, or only the live births during the present marriage are included.

The health care unit has to report liveborn children to the Population Information System. (Statute, 128/2010).

Births must be reported to the Population Information System at the latest on the day following the birth or at the latest on the day after the child's birth has been reported to the health care unit or health care professionals.

The Digital and Population Data Services Agency does not collect data on stillbirths. These data are obtained from stillbirth certificates written out by physicians. The health care unit or the physician in question forwards the certificate to the National Institute for Health and Welfare, which sends it to Statistics Finland (Statute 948/1973 and Act 459/1973).

In the vital statistics the number of stillbirths may differ somewhat from the number of stillbirths in the cause of death statistics. The deadline for data on stillbirths is shorter for the vital statistics than for the cause of death statistics.

The excess of births over deaths, that is, natural population increase means the difference between births and deaths. The crude birth rate refers to the number of births per 1,000 persons of the mean population. The proportion of stillbirths refers to the number of stillborn children per 1,000 liveborn and stillborn children. The general fertility rate indicates the number of liveborn children per 1,000 women of the mean population aged 15 to 49. The age-specific fertility rate indicates the number of live births per 1,000 women of the mean population in the age group in question. This same principle is applied for calculating age-specific legitimate or non-marital fertility rates. The legitimate fertility rate is calculated per married women and the non-marital fertility rate per non-married women. The total fertility rate is obtained by adding up the fertility rates calculated for one year. The rate refers to the estimated number of children born to a woman, given that the fertility rate of that statistical year prevails during the whole reproductive period of this woman on condition that the woman does not die before the end of the said period. The reproduction of the population refers to a change of a generation into a new one. Reproduction is measured by gross reproduction rates or net reproduction rates that generally indicate the ratio between the sizes of the daughter's and mother's generations. The fertility and mortality of the mother's generation before the end of the childbearing age is taken into account in the calculation of the net reproduction rate. In the gross reproduction rate this mortality is not taken into consideration. If the net reproduction rate calculated per one woman is less than one, the daughter's generation is smaller than the mother's generation and the mother's generation has not reproduced itself.

2. Methodological description of survey

The main source used when producing Finnish population statistics is the Population Information System of the Digital and Population Data Services Agency. A Population Information System is updated with information it gets from persons experiencing vital events and parishes of the Evangelical-Lutheran and Greek Orthodox churches. Hospitals send information of births to the maintenance of the Population Information System. Local courts take information of decisions of adoptions and divorces dealt in the court into the Population Information System. Statistics Finland receives the updated data on vital events on a weekly basis from the Population Register Centre.

The deadline for delivering data to Statistics Finland on vital events in the statistical year is the end of January of the following year. The exception to this is the data on stillbirths, which were expected by the end of September. Data on population changes in statistical year delivered to Statistics Finland after this date are included in the data of the following year. Data on events relating to years (statistical year-4) through to (statistical year-1) and reported between February (statistical year) and January (statistical year+1) are included in the statistical year data.

Starting from the statistical reference year 2018, additions or corrections are expected to the background data in the population change data until the end of February following the statistical reference year. The total number of vital events established at the end of January does not change, however, but the aim of the additions and corrections is to improve the quality of the data.

3. Correctness and accuracy of data

In general, the Population Information System of the Digital and Population Data Services Agency can be considered very exhaustive as regards persons. In order that a person obtains a personal identity code, he or she has to be registered in the Population Information System. It is difficult to live in Finland without a personal identity code. A personal identity code is needed so that one can work legally, open a bank account, have dealings with authorities and so on. It can be safely assumed that Finland cannot have any substantial numbers of 'moonlighters' who receive their pay in cash for periods of over one year, for example. Staying in Finland for at least one year is the prerequisite for registering into the population of Finland.

After abolishment of yearly checking of domicile registers (January 1) in 1989 the Population Information System has been maintained only by notifications of changes to population information. Their correctness is determined by a reliability survey made on the addresses in the Population Information System.

The Digital and Population Data Services Agency has charged Statistics Finland with the task of conducting a sample survey on correctness of address information. Around 11,000 people are asked whether their address in the Population Information System is correct. In the most recent survey in 2012, the address was correct for 98.9 per cent of the respondents.

4. Timeliness and promptness of published data

Final vital statistics are published yearly in April to May, except for those on stillbirths, which are available in October. Since 1999 the regional division used has been that of the first day of the following year. Thus the municipalities that unite on the first day of the new year are already combined in the statistics on the last day of the previous year. Information on the vital statistics of the united municipalities before the unification is available from 2003 onwards.

Preliminary population data by municipality are available by month.

5. Accessibility and transparency/clarity of data

Basic population data are available in electronic form by municipality or with larger regional divisions than municipality in Statistics Finland's free 'Population' online service (Statistical databases) at: http://tilastokeskus.fi/tup/tilastotietokannat/index_en.html

General information and long time series on the population of the whole country can be found from the home page of Demographic Statistics at: http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/synt/tau_en.html

Population statistics from 1750 have been digitised into PDF format in the National Library's Doria service:

[Publications on Population structure and Vital statistics in Doria \(in Finnish\).](#)

[Publications on Population censuses in Doria \(in Finnish\).](#)

The chargeable information service contains more specified information about the population by sub-area of municipality, for example.

6. Comparability of statistics

Comparable regional vital statistics time series are available free in the StatFin online database service. The tables always indicate which regional division is used.

Vital statistics data on the numbers of births, deaths and marriages contracted are available from 1749 onwards. From 1776 there are data about mothers having given birth by five-year age group and from 1936 about all children born by age of mother. After the statistical revision of 1877 collection of data on deaths was started by one-year age group, which made it possible to begin calculation of accurate mortality and lifetime tables from the 1880s onwards. On account of this statistical revision, annual collection of data on migration and divorces was also started from 1878.

7. Coherence and consistency/uniformity

Statistics Finland's other statistics use the data of demographic statistics as basic information on population. Consequently, Statistics Finland's other statistics correspond to demographic statistics.

THL, the National Institute for Health and Welfare, maintains a register of births and publishes information about parturients, deliveries and newborns. The figures of THL differ somewhat from those of Statistics Finland. Statistics Finland's figures include among women giving birth those who are permanently resident in Finland at the time of the birth of the child, while the THL register of births contains all women having given birth in Finland and their children.

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Source: Births 2020. Statistics Finland