

Fertility Falls Again, Hitting Record Low

Less Educated, Younger Fertility Keeps Falling • Unmarried Share of Births Down

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA. February 5, 2019—Even though the economy is rebounding, births continued to fall through the third quarter of 2018, and will not recover before 2020, according to the February edition of the [U.S. Fertility Forecast™](#) from [Demographic Intelligence](#), and CDC [data](#) released today. Driven by continued declines in births across many ages, the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) in the U.S. is predicted to fall from 1.76 in 2017 to 1.72 children per woman in 2018. For the 12 months ended in September 2018, it was 1.73 children per woman.

“Fertility declines once confined to younger women now impact virtually all women under age 35,” said Lyman Stone, an economist and advisor to Demographic Intelligence (DI). “Women are more determined to have their ‘ducks in a row’, in terms of education and partnership, before having kids, so fertility has declined, especially for first births and among younger households having a hard time getting their feet under them.”

Stone noted this also impacts nonmarital childbearing, which is projected to continue falling through 2020. “Indeed, one reason that the ratio of nonmarital childbearing has fallen since 2009 is that younger and less educated women are having fewer children.”

Among the trends discussed in DI’s latest forecast, consistent with today’s CDC release:

- The annualized total fertility rate (TFR) in 2018 is likely to be the lowest in U.S. history, at 1.72 children per woman. Year-to-date, TFR has been 1.727.
- The “bottom” on births may not yet have been reached. Births in the United States are falling despite a rapid increase in the population of women who are near their peak childbearing years (the Echo Baby Boom).
- In aggregate terms, the only groups for whom births are rising are Asian women having their 2nd or higher child, women with at least some college education having their 2nd or higher child, and women over 35, having a first child or more children.

The [U.S. Fertility Forecast™](#) is typically more than 98 percent accurate in predicting U.S. birth trends. “The latest data released today from the CDC and from state governments is very much in line with our forecasts,” noted Dr. Samuel Sturgeon, president of Demographic Intelligence. “DI’s projections are particularly important because the economic and cultural drivers of fertility are changing so much today. Thus, Demographic Intelligence gives companies a clear sense of the demographic road ahead.”

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About Demographic Intelligence

[Demographic Intelligence](#) (DI) is the premier provider of U.S. birth forecasts and fertility analytics for businesses with an interest in birth trends in the United States. DI provides reports and consulting services to companies in the following sectors: juvenile products, healthcare, media, financial services, consumer food, and household products. Demographic Intelligence is advised in its work by five leading family scholars: Princeton economist Alicia Adsera, University of Pennsylvania demographer Hans-Peter Kohler, University of North Carolina demographer Philip Morgan, economist Lyman Stone, and University of Virginia sociologist W. Bradford Wilcox.