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Births and fertility in the EU

Over 5.1 million babies born in 2014

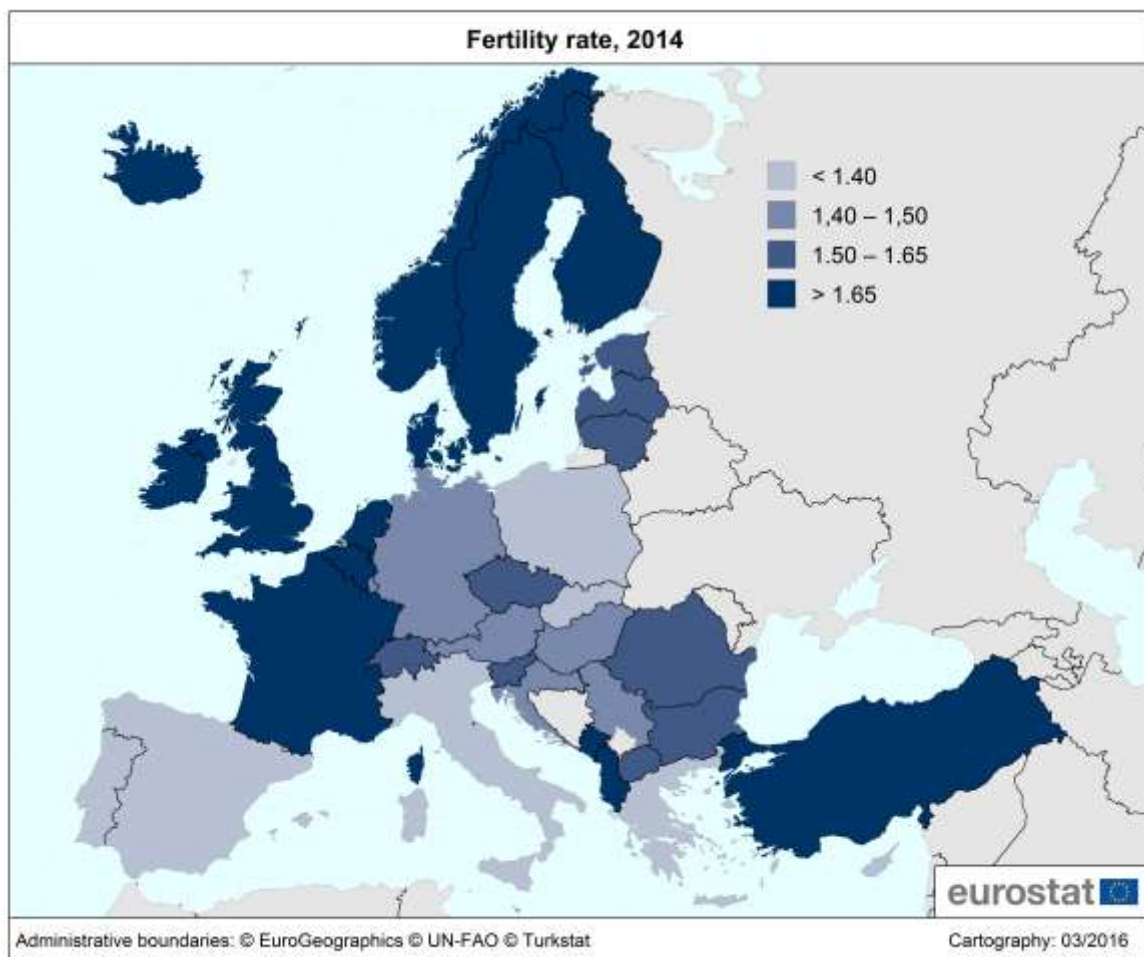
Women first became mothers at almost 29 on average

In 2014, 5.132 million babies were born in the **European Union (EU)**, compared with 5.063 million in 2001. Among Member States, **France** continued to record the highest number of births (819 300 in 2014), ahead of the **United Kingdom** (775 900), **Germany** (714 900), **Italy** (502 600), **Spain** (426 100) and **Poland** (375 200).

On average in the **EU**, women who gave birth to their first child in 2014 were aged nearly 29 (28.8 years). Across Member States, first time mothers were the youngest in **Bulgaria** and the oldest in **Italy**.

Overall, the fertility rate in the **EU** increased from 1.46 in 2001 to 1.58 in 2014. It varied between Member States from 1.23 in **Portugal** to 2.01 in **France** in 2014. A total fertility rate of around 2.1 live births per woman is considered to be the replacement level in developed countries: in other words, the average number of live births per woman required to keep the population size constant in the absence of inward or outward migration.

This information comes from an [article](#) issued by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**. The fertility indicators presented in this news release show only a small part of the large amount of data related to demography available at Eurostat.



Highest fertility rate in France, lowest in Portugal

In 2014, **France** (2.01) was the only Member State with a fertility rate above 2.0. It was followed by **Ireland** (1.94), **Sweden** (1.88) and the **United Kingdom** (1.81). Conversely, the lowest fertility rate was observed in **Portugal** (1.23), ahead of **Greece** (1.30), **Cyprus** (1.31), **Spain** and **Poland** (both 1.32), **Italy** and **Slovakia** (both 1.37).

In most Member States, the fertility rate rose in 2014 compared with 2001. The largest increases were observed in **Latvia** (from 1.22 in 2001 to 1.65 in 2014, or +0.43), the **Czech Republic** (+0.38), **Slovenia** (+0.37), **Lithuania** (+0.34), **Bulgaria** (+0.32) and **Sweden** (+0.31). In contrast, the highest decreases were registered in **Cyprus** (-0.26), **Portugal** (-0.22) and **Luxembourg** (-0.16). For **EU** as a whole, the fertility rate increased from 1.46 in 2001 to 1.58 in 2014 (+0.12).

Total fertility rate, 2001 and 2014

	2001	2014	Change 2014/2001
EU*	1.46	1.58	+0.12
Belgium	1.67	1.74	+0.07
Bulgaria	1.21	1.53	+0.32
Czech Republic	1.15	1.53	+0.38
Denmark	1.74	1.69	-0.05
Germany	1.35	1.47	+0.12
Estonia	1.32	1.54	+0.22
Ireland*	1.94	1.94	0.00
Greece	1.25	1.30	+0.05
Spain	1.24	1.32	+0.08
France	1.90	2.01	+0.11
Croatia	1.46	1.46	0.00
Italy	1.25	1.37	+0.12
Cyprus	1.57	1.31	-0.26
Latvia	1.22	1.65	+0.43
Lithuania	1.29	1.63	+0.34
Luxembourg	1.66	1.50	-0.16
Hungary	1.31	1.44	+0.13
Malta	1.48	1.42	-0.06
Netherlands	1.71	1.71	0.00
Austria	1.33	1.47	+0.14
Poland	1.31	1.32	+0.01
Portugal**	1.45	1.23	-0.22
Romania**	1.27	1.52	+0.25
Slovenia	1.21	1.58	+0.37
Slovakia	1.20	1.37	+0.17
Finland	1.73	1.71	-0.02
Sweden	1.57	1.88	+0.31
United Kingdom**	1.63	1.81	+0.18
Iceland	1.95	1.93	-0.02
Liechtenstein	1.52	1.59	+0.07
Norway	1.78	1.75	-0.03
Switzerland	1.38	1.54	+0.16
Montenegro	:	1.75	:
FYR of Macedonia	1.73	1.52	-0.21
Albania**	:	1.78	:
Serbia	1.58	1.46	-0.12
Turkey	:	2.17	:

: Data not available.

* 2014 data is provisional.

** 2014 data is estimated.

The source dataset can be found [here](#).

First time mothers youngest in Bulgaria and Romania, oldest in Italy and Spain

In 2014, the mean age of women at birth of their first child stood at 27 or below in **Bulgaria** (25.8), **Romania** (26.1), **Latvia** (26.3), **Estonia** (26.6), **Poland** (26.9), **Lithuania** and **Slovakia** (both 27.0). In contrast, this age was 30 or above in **Italy** (30.7), **Spain** (30.6), **Luxembourg** (30.2) and **Greece** (30.0).

In the **EU**, 68 552 more babies were born in 2014 than in 2001. Across Member States, the largest relative increases were in **Sweden** (+25.6%), the **Czech Republic** and **Slovenia** (both +21.1%), **Ireland** (+16.3%) and the **United Kingdom** (+16.0%). In contrast, the highest decrease was in **Portugal** (-27.0%), followed by the **Netherlands** (-13.5%), **Denmark** (-13.1%) and **Romania** (-12.4%).

Number of live births and mean age of women at birth of first child

	Number of births		Mean age of women at birth of first child, 2014
	2001	2014	
EU*	5 062 948	5 131 500	28.8
Belgium	115 372	125 014	28.6
Bulgaria	68 180	67 585	25.8
Czech Republic	90 715	109 860	28.1
Denmark	65 458	56 870	29.2
Germany	734 475	714 927	29.4
Estonia	12 632	13 551	26.6
Ireland***	57 854	67 285	29.6
Greece	102 282	92 149	30.0
Spain	405 313	426 076	30.6
France	804 052	819 328	28.3
Croatia	40 993	39 566	28.1
Italy**	535 282	502 596	30.7
Cyprus	8 167	9 258	29.2
Latvia	19 726	21 746	26.3
Lithuania	31 185	30 369	27.0
Luxembourg	5 459	6 070	30.2
Hungary	97 047	93 281	27.7
Malta	3 957	4 191	28.6
Netherlands	202 603	175 181	29.5
Austria	75 458	81 722	28.9
Poland	368 205	375 160	26.9
Portugal**	112 774	82 367	29.2
Romania**	220 368	193 103	26.1
Slovenia	17 477	21 165	28.6
Slovakia	51 136	55 033	27.0
Finland	56 189	57 232	28.6
Sweden	91 466	114 907	29.2
United Kingdom*	669 123	775 908	28.6
Iceland	4 091	4 375	27.5
Liechtenstein	401	372	:
Norway	56 696	58 976	29.0
Switzerland	72 295	85 287	30.6
Montenegro	:	7 529	:
FYR of Macedonia	27 010	23 596	26.6
Albania**	:	35 760	25.3
Serbia	78 435	66 461	27.5
Turkey	:	1 337 504	:

: Data not available.

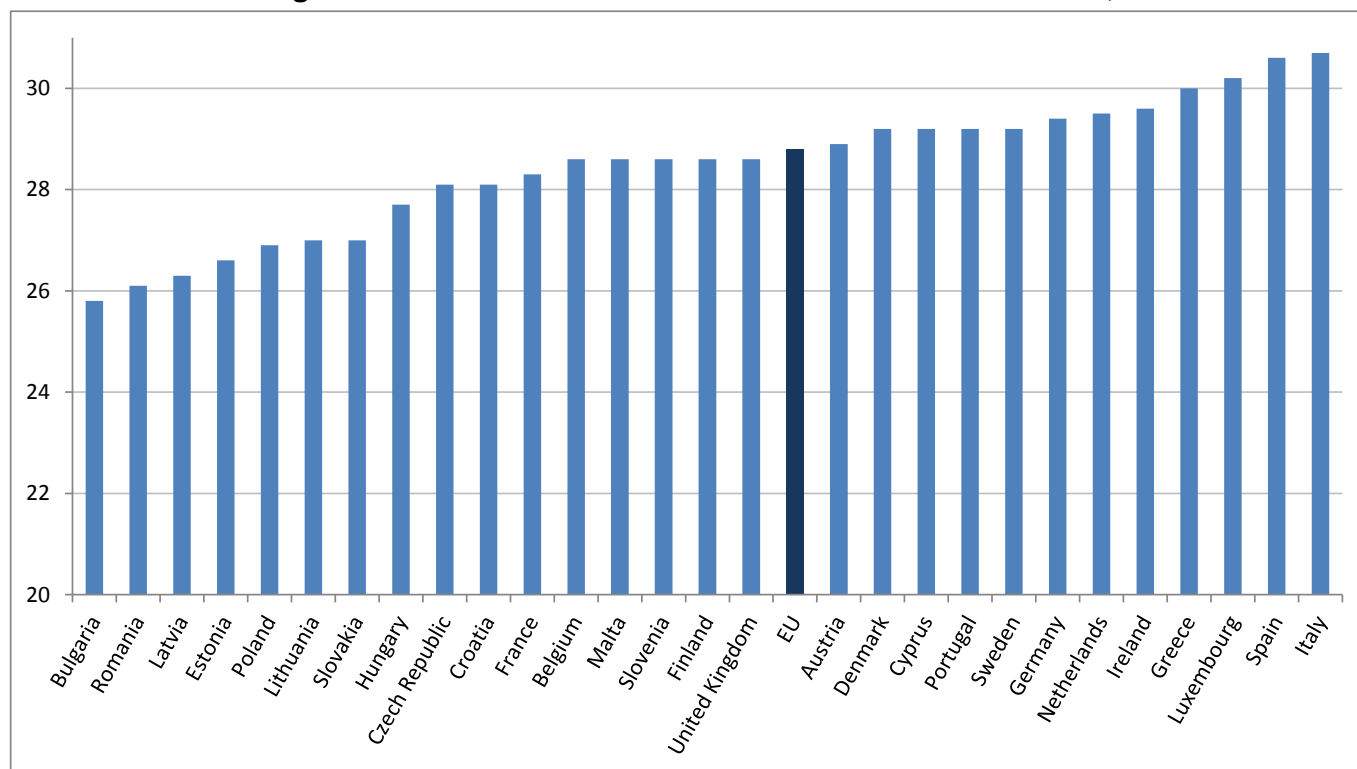
* 2014 data are estimated.

** Data on mean age of women at birth of first child are estimated.

*** Data on mean age of women at birth of first child are provisional.

The source dataset can be found [here](#) for number of births and [here](#) for mean age of women at birth of first child.

Mean age of women at birth of first child in the EU Member States, 2014



Geographical information

The **European Union** (EU) includes Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Methods and definitions

The source of the data on fertility indicators at national level is the annual demographic data collection in the field of demography carried out by Eurostat.

Live births refer to births of children that showed any sign of life. It is the number of births excluding stillbirths.

The **total fertility rate** is defined as the mean number of children who would be born to a woman during her lifetime, if she were to spend her childbearing years conforming to the age-specific fertility rates, which have been measured in a given year.

For more information

Eurostat [website section](#) dedicated to statistics on demography.

Eurostat [database](#) on births and fertility data.

Eurostat [Statistics Explained article](#) on fertility statistics.

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