

Statistical bulletin

# Conceptions in England and Wales: 2019

Annual statistics on conceptions to residents of England and Wales, with numbers and rates by age group including women aged under 18 years.



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# 1 . Main points

- In 2019, there were an estimated 821,089 conceptions to women of all ages in England and Wales compared with 839,043 in 2018, a decrease of 2.1%; this was the largest annual decrease since 2012.
- The conception rate for women under 18 years decreased from 16.8 conceptions per 1,000 women in 2018 to 15.8 in 2019; this is in line with the recent trend of a decreasing under-18 conception rate since 2007 where it stood at 41.6.
- In 2019, the number of conceptions to women aged under 16 years increased from 2,413 in 2018 to 2,430 (0.7% change); while this ended 11 years of consecutive decreases, the conception rate for women under 16 years remained the same at 2.5 conceptions per 1,000 women.
- The percentage of conceptions leading to a legal abortion among all women in England and Wales increased from 24.0% in 2018 to 25.2% in 2019, the second year in a row this has increased for all age groups.
- For the fourth consecutive year, women aged 40 years and over were the only age group to see an increase in conception rates; in 2019, there were 16.7 conceptions per 1,000 women aged 40 years and over, continuing the generally increasing trend seen since 1990 when records began.
- In 2019, there was a decrease in conception rates for women under 18 years in Wales and all English regions; despite having the largest annual decrease (12.4%), the North East remained the region with the highest conception rate among women aged under 18 years.

## 2 . Conceptions data

### [Conceptions in England and Wales](#)

Dataset | Released 5 August 2021

Annual statistics on conceptions to residents of England and Wales - numbers and rates by age group, inside and outside marriage or civil partnership, and area of usual residence.

### [Quarterly conceptions to women aged under 18 years](#)

Dataset | Released 5 August 2021

Provisional quarterly statistics on the number of conceptions to women aged under 18 years by region and other local authority area within England and Wales.

## 3 . Measuring the data

Conception statistics bring together records of birth registrations collected under the [Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953](#) and of abortion notifications supplied under the [Abortion Act 1967](#).

They include all the pregnancies of women resident in England and Wales that lead to one of the following outcomes:

- a maternity at which one or more live births or stillbirths occur, which is registered in England and Wales
- a termination of a pregnancy by abortion under the 1967 Act, which takes place in England and Wales; pregnancies that lead to miscarriages are not included

Conceptions in 2019 may result in maternities or abortions in 2019 or 2020. Maternities that result in one or more live births or stillbirths are counted once only.

Our [User guide to conception statistics](#) provides further information on data quality, legislation and procedures relating to conceptions, and includes a glossary of terms.

## Quality

### Timeliness and punctuality

In response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, birth registration services in England and Wales were suspended in March 2020. From June 2020, birth registrations restarted where it was safe to do so but the 2020 birth registration data used in this release have been delayed. This has had a direct impact on our release calendar. As a result, the release of annual conceptions in 2019, and quarterly conceptions in September to December 2019 and January to March 2020 had to be postponed to August 2021 to ensure that our data are as complete as possible before publication.

More quality and methodology information on strengths, limitations, appropriate uses, and how the data were created is available in the [Conception statistics QMI](#).

## 4 . Related links

### [Abortion statistics for England and Wales: 2019](#)

Bulletin | Released 11 June 2020

Report produced by the Department of Health and Social Care providing statistics on abortions recorded in England and Wales in 2019.

### [Births in England and Wales: 2019](#)

Bulletin | Released 22 July 2020

Live births, stillbirths, and the intensity of childbearing, measured by the total fertility rate.

### [Birth characteristics in England and Wales: 2019](#)

Bulletin | Released 16 November 2020

Annual live births by sex, ethnicity and month, maternities by place of birth and with multiple births, and stillbirths by age of parents and calendar quarter.

### [Northern Ireland termination of pregnancy statistics 2019/2020](#)

Publication | Released 20 January 2021

This publication presents information on the number of admissions with a diagnosis of medical abortion and termination of pregnancy to Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland during 2007 to 2008 and 2018 to 2019.

### [Teenage pregnancies](#)

Publication | Released 6 July 2021

This release by Information Services Division (ISD) provides an annual update on teenage pregnancy statistics in Scotland.