

Birth and fertility among the resident population in Italy

Year 2017

In 2017, 458,151 births were registered in the Resident Population Register (-15 thousand births over the previous year). The figures confirmed the downward trend that began in recent years: 120 thousand births less compared with 2008.

In 2017, women of child-bearing age were about 12.8 millions (-900 thousand compared with 2008). The observed birth difference between 2008 and 2017 was attributable for almost three-fourths to the change in women's age structure, and for the remaining part to a decreasing fertility.

The recent decline in birth mainly resulted from the reduction of children born to Italian parents, equal to 358,940 births in 2017 (-121 thousand in nine years).

The decline in births was due to declining births to married parents: 316,543 in 2017, compared with 147,000 in 2008. This major decline was partly due to the recent sharp drop in weddings, that reached the lowest level in 2014 (189,765 weddings; -57,000 compared with 2008).

In 2015 and in 2016 marriages increased again compared with the previous year (+4,612 and +9,000 respectively), but in 2017 a new decrease was observed (191,287 marriages compared with 200,000 in 2016).

In 2017, almost 70% of births occurred inside the marriage: the link between nuptiality and births in our country continues to be strong. Nevertheless, the number of births outside marriage continued to increase, reaching 141,608 births in 2017 (30,9%).

The decrease of births was characterized by a stronger reduction of births of the first order, from 283,922 in 2008 to 214,267 in 2017 (-25% compared with -17% of higher order births).

The number of births with at least one foreign parent decreased slightly from 2012 (-8 thousand units) to just 99,211 (21.7% of the total), for the first time under 100 thousand. In 2017 the more relevant decrease was registered for babies born to foreign parents (67,933).

In 2017, Romanian (14,693), Moroccans (9,261), Albanians (7,273) and Chinese (3,869) accounted for 51.8% of total foreign births in Italy.

Since 2010, the fertility decline has always been underway. In 2017, the average number of children per woman fell to 1.32, compared with 1.46 in 2010. The total fertility rate was 1.24 children for Italian women and 1.98 for the foreign ones: a significant decrease compared with seven year before, when the average number of children was 1.34 for Italian women and 2.43 for foreign women.

The reduction in the average number of first children per woman between 2010 and 2017 was responsible for 68% of the overall drop in fertility of Italian women and for 81% of that of foreign women.

Looking at generations, the average number of children per woman decreased from 2.5 with regards to women born in early 1920s (immediately after the Great War), to 2 children with regards to women of the post-war generations (1945-49), to the estimated level of 1.44 children for women born in 1977.

Over the same considered period there was a relevant increase in the proportion of child-free women: 11.1% for the 1950 generation, 13% for the 1960 generation and 22% for the 1977 generation (at the end of the cycle of reproductive life - estimate).

TABLE 1. MAIN CHARACTERISTICS AND INDICATORS OF FERTILITY AND NUPTIALITY.

Years 2008, 2010, 2014-2017

	2008	2010	2014	2015	2016	2017
Live births	576,659	561,944	502,596	485,78	473,438	458,151
Births of first order	283,922	274,75	244,646	230,778	227,412	214,267
Births to at least one foreign parent	96,442	104,773	104,056	100,766	100,363	99,211
Births to foreign couples	72,472	78,082	75,067	72,096	69,379	67,933
Births to Italian couples	480,217	457,171	398,54	385,014	373,075	358,940
Births outside marriage	112,849	123,42	138,68	139,611	141,757	141,608
Births outside marriage (percentage values)	19.6	22.0	27.6	28.7	29.9	30.9
Total fertility rate	1.45	1.46	1.37	1.35	1.34	1.32
Mean age of women at childbirth	31.1	31.3	31.5	31.7	31.8	31.9
Total fertility rate of Italian women	1.34	1.34	1.29	1.27	1.26	1.24
Mean age at childbearing for Italian women	31.7	31.9	32.1	32.3	32.4	32.5
Total Fertility rate of foreign women	2.65	2.43	1.97	1.94	1.97	1.98
Mean age at childbearing for foreign women	27.5	28.1	28.6	28.7	28.7	28.9
Marriages	246,613	217,7	189,765	194,377	203,258	191,287
Marriages of both italian spouses	209,695	192,618	165,535	170,359	177,647	163,543
First marriages	212,476	186,045	159,127	160,798	165,316	152,500
First marriage rate - Males	536.2	482.9	421.1	429.5	449.6	419.0
First marriage rate - Females	594.3	532.9	463.4	474.6	496.9	465.1
Mean age at first marriage - Males (16-49)	32.1	32.5	33.1	33.3	33.4	33.6
Mean age at first marriage - Males (All ages)	33.0	33.4	34.3	34.7	34.9	35.2
Mean age at first marriage - Females (16-49)	29.4	29.9	30.7	30.9	31.1	31.3
Mean age at first marriage - Females (All ages)	29.9	30.4	31.3	31.7	31.9	32.2

FIGURE 1. BIRTHS AND FIRST MARRIAGES IN ITALY (N.I. 1995=100)

Years 1995-2017

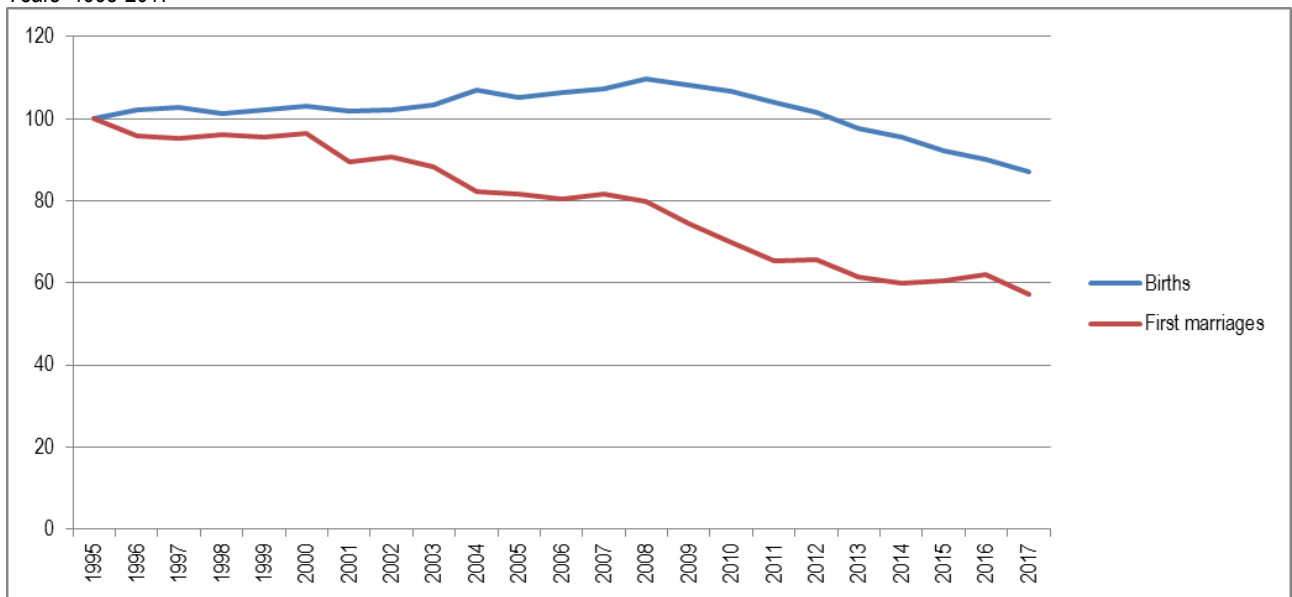


FIGURE 2. FIRST MARRIAGE RATE BY AGE - FEMALES (PER 1.000 FEMALES)

Years 2008, 2014 e 2017

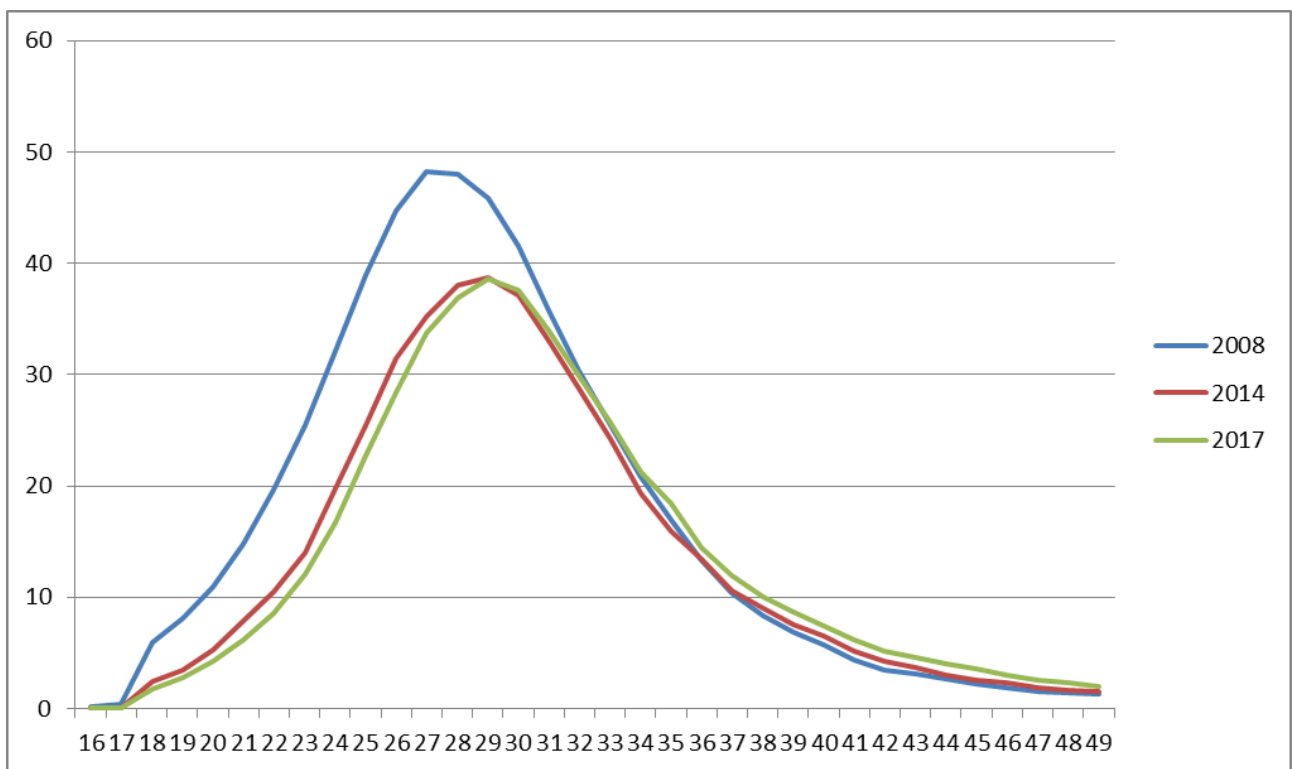


TABLE 2. BIRTHS TO UNMARRIED PARENTS BY REGION. Years 1995 and 2017, percentages

REGIONS	1995	2017	
	Total population	Total population	<i>of which: both Italian parents</i>
North-West	9,5	33,3	38,4
North-East	10	34,5	41,2
Centre	9,1	36,2	39,7
South	5,2	23,2	22,3
Islands	8,7	27,1	26,8
ITALY	8,1	30,9	33,0

TABLE 3. BIRTHS TO MARRIED AND UNMARRIED PARTNERS BY TYPE OF COUPLE. Year 2017

TYPE OF COUPLE	Births to married parents	Births to unmarried parents	Total
Italian couple	67,0	33,0	100,0
Foreign father and Italian mother	64,5	35,5	100,0
Italian father and foreign mother	71,2	28,8	100,0
Foreign couple	83,2	16,8	100,0
Total	69,1	30,9	100,0

TABLE 4. TOTAL FERTILITY RATE (TFR) AND MEAN AGE OF PARENTS AT CHILDBIRTH BY CITIZENSHIP OF MOTHER AND REGION. 1995 and 2017

REGIONS	Total fertility rate				Mean age of mothers				Mean age of fathers
	2017		1995		2017			1995	2017
	Italian	Foreign	Total	Total	Italian	Foreign	Total	Total	Total
Piemonte	1,21	2,03	1,34	1,04	32,6	29,0	31,8	30,2	35,4
Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste	1,27	2,02	1,35	1,1	32,6	29,4	32,1	30	35,6
Lombardia	1,25	2,13	1,39	1,07	33,0	29,1	32,0	30,8	35,7
<i>Bolzano/Bozen</i>	1,64	2,55	1,74	1,39	32,1	29,4	31,7	30	35,2
<i>Trento</i>	1,39	2,22	1,49	1,27	32,7	29,0	32,0	30,4	35,8
Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol	1,52	2,38	1,62	1,34	32,4	29,2	31,8	30,2	35,5
Veneto	1,22	2,10	1,36	1,07	33,0	29,1	32,1	30,6	35,7
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	1,19	2,01	1,31	0,95	32,8	29,0	32,0	30,6	35,5
Liguria	1,14	2,01	1,28	0,94	33,0	28,6	32,0	30,8	35,7
Emilia-Romagna	1,17	2,11	1,35	0,97	32,8	29,1	31,8	30,3	35,5
Toscana	1,18	1,86	1,28	0,99	33,2	28,7	32,1	30,4	35,7
Umbria	1,16	1,65	1,24	1,08	32,7	29,0	32,0	30,1	35,6
Marche	1,16	1,88	1,25	1,11	32,9	28,7	32,1	30,3	35,8
Lazio	1,23	1,61	1,27	1,11	33,2	28,9	32,4	30,4	35,8
Abruzzo	1,18	1,88	1,24	1,19	32,8	28,6	32,2	30	35,7
Molise	1,16	1,88	1,19	1,22	33,1	27,0	32,6	29,4	36,3
Campania	1,33	1,83	1,35	1,52	31,6	28,6	31,5	28,9	34,8
Puglia	1,21	1,94	1,24	1,38	32,1	28,0	31,8	29,1	35,2
Basilicata	1,15	1,91	1,19	1,31	33,1	28,2	32,7	29,6	36,5
Calabria	1,25	1,77	1,28	1,4	31,9	28,2	31,6	28,9	35,5
Sicilia	1,32	2,13	1,35	1,49	31,3	28,0	31,1	28,6	34,7
Sardegna	1,04	1,70	1,06	1,06	32,8	28,4	32,5	30,5	36,2
North-West	1,23	2,10	1,37	1,05	32,9	29,1	32,0	30,7	35,6
North-East	1,23	2,12	1,38	1,05	32,8	29,1	31,9	30,5	35,6
Centre	1,20	1,72	1,27	1,07	33,1	28,8	32,3	30,4	35,8
South	1,27	1,86	1,29	1,42	31,9	28,3	31,7	29	35,2
Islands	1,26	2,04	1,29	1,4	31,5	28,1	31,3	29,1	34,9
ITALY	1,24	1,98	1,32	1,19	32,5	28,9	31,9	29,8	35,4

FIGURE 3. AGE-SPECIFIC FERTILITY RATES. Years 1995, 2010 and 2017, values per 1,000 women

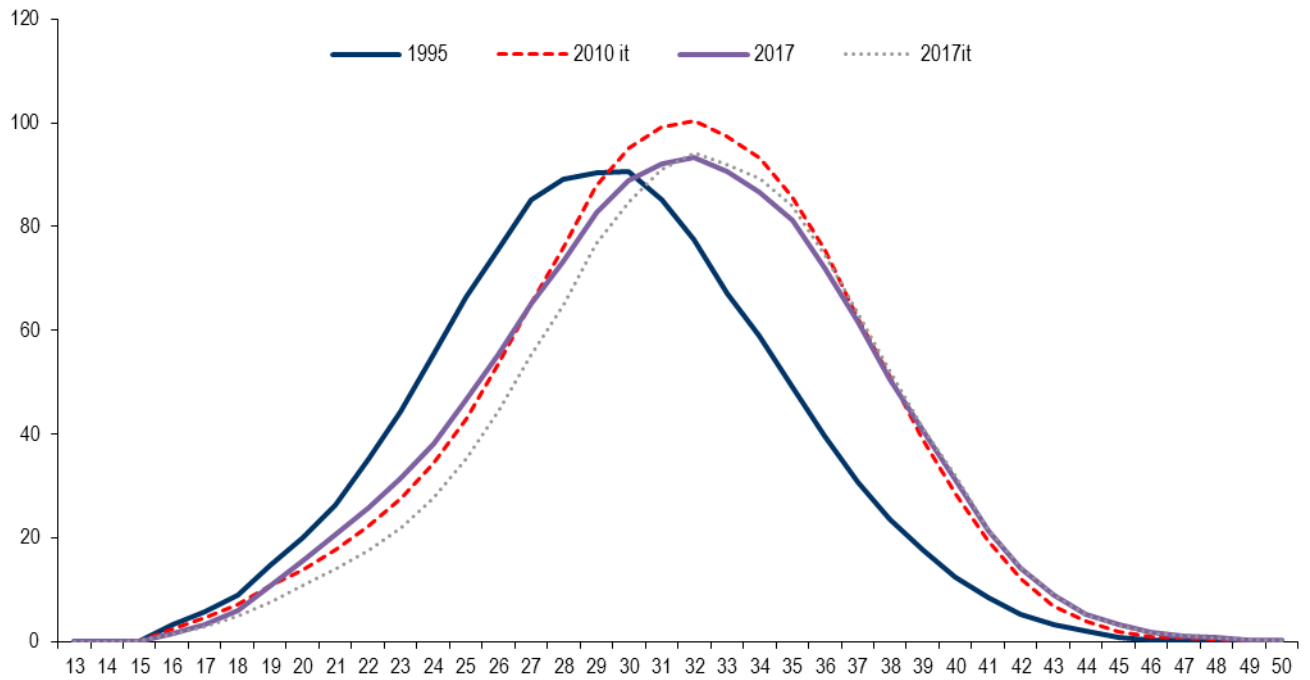
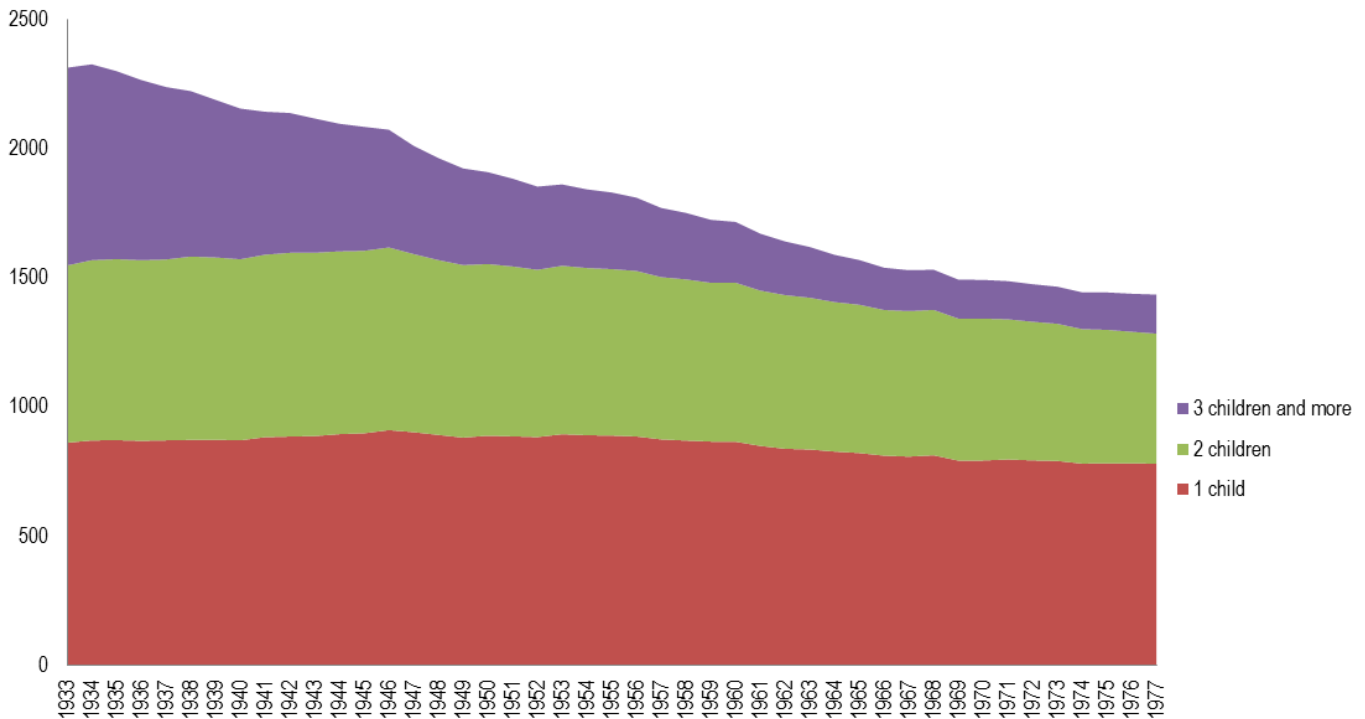


FIGURE 4. TOTAL FERTILITY RATE BY BIRTH ORDER AND GENERATION.

Women born from 1933 to 1977 (a), values per 1,000 women



(a) Estimates.

TABLE 5. TOP FIFTEEN NAMES FOR BABY BOYS AND GIRLS

Year 2017, absolute values, percentages and cumulative percentages

Boys' baby names	absolute values	%	cumulative %	Girls' baby names	absolute values	%	cumulative %
1 FRANCESCO	7.209	3,10	3,10	SOFIA	7.173	3,30	3,3
2 LEONARDO	6.622	2,80	5,90	GIULIA	6.143	2,80	6
3 ALESSANDRO	5.987	2,60	8,50	AURORA	5.808	2,60	8,7
4 LORENZO	5.789	2,50	11,00	ALICE	3.691	1,70	10,4
5 MATTIA	5.715	2,40	13,40	GINEVRA	3.564	1,60	12
6 ANDREA	5.322	2,30	15,70	EMMA	3.525	1,60	13,6
7 GABRIELE	5.129	2,20	17,90	GIORGIA	3.474	1,60	15,2
8 RICCARDO	4.336	1,90	19,80	GRETA	3.270	1,50	16,6
9 MATTEO	4.072	1,70	21,50	MARTINA	3.129	1,40	18,1
10 TOMMASO	4.020	1,70	23,20	BEATRICE	2.970	1,30	19,4
11 EDOARDO	3.732	1,60	24,80	ANNA	2.954	1,30	20,7
12 FEDERICO	3.189	1,40	26,20	CHIARA	2.908	1,30	22,1
13 GIUSEPPE	3.170	1,40	27,50	SARA	2.656	1,20	23,3
14 ANTONIO	3.101	1,30	28,90	NICOLE	2.526	1,10	24,4
15 DIEGO	2.942	1,30	30,10	LUDOVICA	2.500	1,10	25,6

TABLE 6. TOP FIFTEEN NAMES FOR FOREIGN BABY BOYS AND GIRLS.

Year 2017, absolute values, percentages and cumulative percentages

Boys' baby names	v.a.	%	cumulative %	Girls' baby names	v.a.	%	cumulative %
1 ADAM	428	1,2	1,2	SOFIA	551	1,7	1,7
2 DAVID	292	0,8	2,1	SARA	422	1,3	3,0
3 YOUSSEF	290	0,8	2,9	EMMA	248	0,8	3,7
4 RAYAN	283	0,8	3,7	AURORA	245	0,7	4,4
5 MATTEO	246	0,7	4,4	AMELIA	197	0,6	5,0
6 GABRIEL	232	0,7	5,1	EMILY	193	0,6	5,6
7 AMIR	225	0,6	5,7	JANNAT	176	0,5	6,2
8 LEONARDO	200	0,6	6,3	MALAK	171	0,5	6,7
9 MOHAMED	194	0,6	6,9	GIULIA	169	0,5	7,2
10 KEVIN	177	0,5	7,4	AMIRA	155	0,5	7,7
11 OMAR	165	0,5	7,8	MELISSA	153	0,5	8,1
12 LUCA	162	0,5	8,3	NOEMI	153	0,5	8,6
13 ALESSANDRO	162	0,5	8,8	ALESSIA	141	0,4	9,0
14 DANIEL	162	0,5	9,2	SOFIA MARIA	132	0,4	9,4
15 MATTIA	162	0,5	9,7	AYA	126	0,4	9,8

TABLE 7. TOP FIVE NAMES FOR FOREIGN BABY BOYS AND GIRLS BY CITIZENSHIP

Year 2017, absolute values and percentages

CITIZENSHIP	Boys' baby names	absolute values	%	CITIZENSHIP	Girls' baby names	absolute values	%
ROMANIAN	DAVID	168	2,2	RUMENA	SOFIA	177	2,4
	LUCA	112	1,5		SOFIA MARIA	131	1,8
	GABRIEL	109	1,4		EMMA	70	1,0
	MATTEO	104	1,4		MARIA	66	0,9
	ALEXANDRU	80	1,0		GIULIA MARIA	59	0,8
MOROCCAN	ADAM	314	6,6	MAROCCHINA	SARA	172	3,9
	YOUSSEF	219	4,6		MALAK	162	3,6
	RAYAN	191	4,0		JANNAT	147	3,3
	AMIR	187	4,0		AMIRA	125	2,8
	IMRAN	129	2,7		AYA	113	2,5
ALBANIAN	GABRIEL	68	1,8	ALBANESE	AMELIA	129	3,5
	MATTIA	68	1,8		AURORA	127	3,4
	NOEL	64	1,7		NOEMI	105	2,8
	KEVIN	64	1,7		EMMA	99	2,7
	ENEA	64	1,7		EMILY	93	2,5
CHINESE	KEVIN	38	1,9	CINESE	EMILY	30	1,6
	LEONARDO	21	1,0		ELISA	19	1,0
	MATTEO	21	1,0		SOFIA	17	0,9
	ALESSIO	18	0,9		ANGELA	16	0,9
	WILLIAM	18	0,9		GIOIA	14	0,8

Glossary

Absolute change: the difference between the values in a specified time reference period to values at the beginning of the period.

Average annual percentage change (or average annual rate of change): when changes over a period of more than one calendar year are studied, the average annual rate of change may be computed by dividing the percentage change by the number of years in the interval.

Average number of children per woman (or total fertility rate – TFR): is the average number of live children that a cohort of women would bear if they experienced the age-specific fertility rates of the calendar year in question throughout their childbearing lifespan.

Births outside marriage: an estimate obtained by considering the total number of births for which the marital status of both parents is known and subtracting from this amount the total number of births to parents who are both married.

Births to at least one foreign parent: total of foreign births plus births to mixed couples.

Births to mixed couples: entries in the population register for births of Italian citizenship with one Italian parent and the other of foreign citizenship.

Citizenship: the status of being a citizen of a State, required and documented in order to enjoy rights and be subject to specific duties.

First marriage. Marriage in which the marital status of the bride/groom at the moment of the wedding is single.

First-marriage index (or rate). Sum of specific marriage-rate ratios calculated from the ratio, for each age class, of the number of first marriages to the average total annual population.

Foreign births: entries in the population register for births with both parents with foreign citizenship.

Marital status: the civil status of each individual in relation to the marriage laws of the country. Single: a male or female citizen who has never entered into marriage. Married: a citizen who has not obtained the dissolution or termination of the civil effects of the marriage. Divorced: a married citizen who has obtained the dissolution or termination of the civil effects of the marriage. Widow/Widower: a citizen whose marriage has ended due to the death of her/his partner.

Mean age at birth: the age at the time of birth, expressed in years and tenths of years.

Mean age at first marriage. It is the mean age of men or women at first marriage if subject throughout their lives to the age-specific marriage rates of first marriages only in a given year.

Percentage change: ratio between absolute change and initial amount. It is then multiplied by 100.

Population register: the continuous system for recording resident population. It is continuously updated by recording births to parents who are resident in the municipality, deletions due to death of residents and registrations/deletions due to change of residence to/from another municipality or to/from a foreign country.

Resident foreign citizen: a person with foreign citizenship or stateless person recorded in the population register.

Resident population: people with usual place of resident in a municipality, even if on the date in question they are absent because they are temporarily in another municipality or abroad.

Methodological note

The individual survey of entries in the population register for births (Istat P.4 form) was implemented by Istat from 1 January 1999 and makes it possible to obtain information at the local municipal level (and by census area) on live births among the resident population, classifying them according to the following variables: sex of the new-born, date of birth (of the child), place of birth, citizenship (of the child), mother's (individual years of) age and cohort, father's (individual years of age) and cohort, mother's marital status, father's marital status, mother's citizenship and father's citizenship. These data thus allow birth-rate and fertility trends to be monitored and analysed in relation to the main demographic characteristics of parents.

The level of coverage of the individual survey, which is evaluated in relation to the information recorded by Istat through the annual municipal summary forms indicating the movement and calculation of the overall resident population and the foreign population (respectively Istat P.2 and Istat P.3), is approximately 97% in both cases.

More detailed data are available online by consulting the I.Stat datawarehouse at <http://dati.istat.it/> and, Demo, the topic-based system, at <http://demo.istat.it/>

For more details please refer to the Italian version

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