Data Availability

Human Fertility Database

The HFD contains data for 22 countries, including regional data for Germany and the UK. More countries will be added over time. However, the HFD is limited by the availability of high quality data. At the final stage, the HFD is expected to encompass continuously updated data for 40 to 50 countries and areas.

For all countries listed, the HFD tries to collect the longest possible continuous time series. The length of currently available data sets varies across countries. The longest time series of data for all birth orders combined stems from Sweden (dating to 1891), while the longest time series of birth order-specific data is from the USA (since 1933).

Human Fertility Collection

Data for 73 countries and areas are currently provided in the HFC. Data for all birth orders combined can be found since 1751 (Sweden) and the earliest year for which birth order-specific data are available is 1917 (the USA). The main data sources are online databases of national statistical offices, statistical and scientific publications, and data collections of individual researchers and research organizations (e.g., the European Demographic Observatory – ODE).

Unlike the HFD, the HFC includes many alternative fertility indicators. HFC data vary in quality and are not limited to continuous time series. Due to variability in data origins and estimation methods, the level of data comparability and reliability is lower than that of the HFD. Therefore, users must be cautious when using these data for their research.

Acknowledgements

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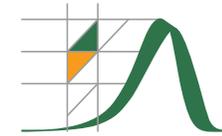
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Human Fertility Data Project

HFD - humanfertility.org
HFC - fertilitydata.org

a joint project of

MAX PLANCK INSTITUTE FOR DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

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Human Fertility Data Project

Background

The Human Fertility Data Project, a joint endeavour of the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research (MPIDR) and the Vienna Institute of Demography (VID), aims to provide free and user-friendly access to a variety of fertility data.

The Project consists of two companion databases based at the MPIDR in Rostock, Germany: the Human Fertility Database (HFD) and the Human Fertility Collection (HFC).

The HFD is based entirely on official vital statistics and provides detailed period and cohort fertility data of high quality. A great emphasis is placed on data checking and documentation, on uniformity of applied methods and data design, and on providing parity-specific fertility indicators. The HFD follows four guiding principles: comparability, flexibility, accessibility, and reproducibility of the presented data.

The HFC has been designed to supplement the HFD and to incorporate fertility data that are valuable for fertility research but do not meet all quality standards of the HFD. Thus the geographic coverage of the HFC is much broader, including less developed parts of the world. HFC data are assembled from various, not necessarily official, data sources. At present, the HFC displays period fertility data for all birth orders combined and by birth order. However, in the future more fertility dimensions (place of residence, ethnicity, marital status, etc.) shall be included. We welcome submissions of any new data to the HFC.

Human Fertility Database (HFD)

Available at www.humanfertility.org

The data and indicators available in the HFD:
- Live births, population exposure, fertility rates by age and birth order
- Summary indicators of period and cohort fertility
- Cohort and period fertility tables, conditional fertility rates by age and parity, and table summary indicators

Example: HFC country data page

Human Fertility Collection (HFC)

Available at www.fertilitydata.org

The data and indicators available in the HFC at present:
- Fertility rates by age and birth order (original as well as standardized age scale and birth order range)
- Cumulative period fertility rates
- TFRs and mean ages at birth

Example: HFC country data page