



Population Explosion and Fertility Rates

The Prime Minister highlighted “**population explosion**” and underscored the need for “social awareness” to deal with this concern while addressing the nation on 73rd Independence Day.

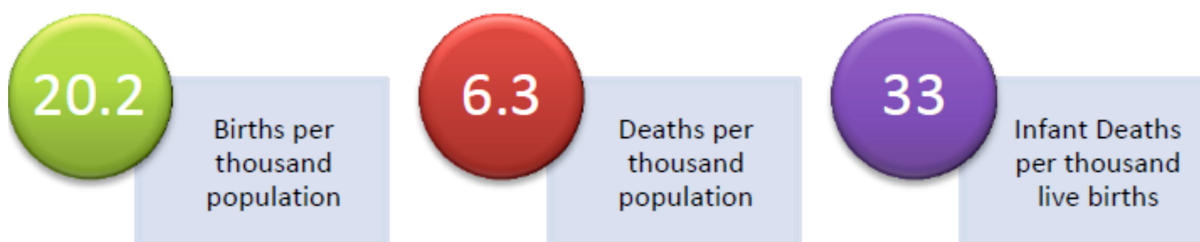
- However, trends indicate that the country has [consistently made gradual improvements](#) in curbing its fertility rates.

Total Fertility Rate

- The national Total Fertility Rate (TFR) is estimated to be still marginally higher than the replacement rate.
- The latest estimates (for 2017) by the **Sample Registration System (SRS)** under the Registrar General of India (RGI) has pegged the **country’s TFR at 2.2**, marginally more than the **replacement rate which stands at 2.1**.
 - **TFR** measures the number of children born to a woman at the end of childbearing age.
 - **Replacement Rate** is the average number of children a woman needs to have to keep the population at a constant size.

Sample Registration System

- The **Sample Registration System (SRS)** is a large-scale demographic survey for providing reliable annual estimates of Infant mortality rate, birth rate, death rate and other fertility & mortality indicators at the national and subnational levels.
- The field investigation consists of **continuous enumeration of births and deaths in selected sample units** by resident part time enumerators, generally anganwadi workers & teachers, and an independent survey every six months by SRS supervisors. The data obtained by these two independent functionaries are matched. The unmatched and partially matched events are re-verified in the field. The SRS sample is replaced every ten years based on the latest census frame.



India at a glance, 2017

States with higher TFR

- Seven states have recorded a higher TFR than the national average of 2.2 — Uttar Pradesh (3.0), Bihar (3.2), Madhya Pradesh (2.7), Rajasthan (2.6), Assam (2.3), Chhattisgarh (2.4) and Jharkhand (2.5) — that account for about 45% of the total population in the 2011 Census.
- Gujarat and Haryana, too, recorded a TFR of 2.2, which is above the replacement rate but is equal to the national average.

States with lower TFR

- Relatively well off states in the south — Kerala (1.7), Tamil Nadu (1.6), Karnataka (1.7), Maharashtra (1.7), Andhra Pradesh (1.6) and Telangana (1.7) — demonstrate fertility rates and TFR below the rate required for population replacement,
- West Bengal (1.6), Jammu and Kashmir (1.6) and Odisha (1.9), too, were estimated to have lower TFRs in 2017.

Reasons for trends in TFR

- The latest report of 2017 underlined that the TFR has declined from 5.2 to 4.5 between 1971 and 1981 and from 3.6 to 2.2 between 1991 and 2017.
- Trends vary along the [rural-urban divide as well as the literacy levels](#) of women.
 - The SRS reveals that while an **“illiterate” woman** is likely to give birth to 2.9 children on average, a **“literate” woman** will produce fewer (2.1) children. The TFR for a woman with education levels of a **graduate or above** is 1.4 children.
 - Likewise, urban areas have been usually found to have a lower TFR than rural areas.
- This decline in fertility rates is also reflected in the total population growth recorded in the Census. The decadal population growth in the intervening period between the 2001 Census and the 2011 Census has seen a decline after the 1971 Census.

[Source: Indian Express](#)

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