

Australia's biggest baby boom for 30 years

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AUSTRALIA is in the middle of its biggest baby boom in more than three decades, official statistics have confirmed.

More babies were born last year than in any since official records began, with the exception of 1971.

And Australians are having their babies later in life – the median age of a first-time mum last year was almost 31, while the average dads were just over 33 years of age. These are the highest-ever median ages for new parents.

The fertility rate – the number of children an average woman is expected to have in her lifetime – rose to 1.81 last year, up from 1.79 the previous year.

The Federal Government's baby bonus – introduced in 2004 and now worth \$4000 per baby – has been widely credited with encouraging Australians to have more kids.

Figures released today showed 265,900 births were registered in 2006, the highest number since the 276,400 births reported 35 years previously.

The Northern Territory had the highest proportion of new teenage mothers, with 63.6 out of every 1,000 women aged 15-19 giving birth last year.

The next highest was Tasmania, with 26.6 out of every 1000 women in that age group giving birth.

Women aged between 30 and 34 had the highest fertility rate in most of Australia, while in Tasmania and the Northern Territory it was women aged between 25 and 29.

Tasmania also experienced its highest fertility rate since 1975, with the ABS estimating that the average woman in that state would give birth to 2.12 babies in her lifetime.

The average number of births also increased last year to 63.3 babies per 1,000 women aged between 35 and 39, which was the highest since 1961.

Of all the births in 2006, 67 per cent of new parents were married, compared to 83 per cent in 1986.

2.17

SUMMARY, State and territories—2006

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas. (a)	NT	ACT	Aust. (b)
FERTILITY									
Age-specific fertility rates(c)									
15–19 years(d)	13.2	9.7	19.7	16.7	19.6	26.6	63.6	9.1	15.4
20–24 years	49.9	38.9	61.3	53.8	60.2	81.7	97.7	32.6	51.6
25–29 years	100.1	91.0	107.3	105.0	109.3	127.3	106.0	87.4	100.8
30–34 years	120.0	126.9	112.2	114.4	123.4	121.8	103.3	124.6	120.1
35–39 years	64.7	69.7	55.3	57.5	63.7	55.7	54.9	69.3	63.3
40–44 years	11.9	12.8	9.3	8.9	10.9	9.1	10.9	13.4	11.3
45–49 years(e)	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.6
Total fertility rate(f)	1.800	1.745	1.831	1.788	1.941	2.123	2.187	1.684	1.814
Net reproduction rate(g)	0.859	0.837	0.875	0.858	0.943	1.008	1.056	0.809	0.869
BIRTHS									
Total births	87 336	65 236	52 665	18 260	27 776	6 475	3 696	4 479	265 949
Males	45 099	33 536	27 128	9 369	14 042	3 349	1 855	2 299	136 692
Females	42 237	31 700	25 537	8 891	13 734	3 126	1 841	2 180	129 257
Sex ratio	106.8	105.8	106.2	105.4	102.2	107.1	100.8	105.5	105.8
Indigenous births registered(h)	3 516	782	3 463	733	1 910	413	1 565	109	12 496
Nuptial births (%)	71.6	72.7	61.2	63.4	62.6	50.8	35.3	72.8	67.3
Exnuptial births (%)	28.4	27.3	38.8	36.6	37.4	49.2	64.7	27.2	32.7
Exnuptial paternity not acknowledged (%)	2.9	1.6	3.3	3.5	3.3	9.8	21.5	2.1	3.2
Crude birth rate	12.8	12.7	12.9	11.6	13.5	13.2	17.5	13.4	12.8
CONFINEMENTS									
Total confinements	86 007	64 017	51 725	17 992	27 391	6 367	3 642	4 383	261 550
Nuptial	61 559	46 462	31 598	11 379	17 120	3 220	1 280	3 190	175 827
First nuptial	26 117	21 111	12 771	4 844	7 135	1 281	523	1 454	75 245
Exnuptial	24 448	17 555	20 127	6 613	10 271	3 147	2 362	1 193	85 723
Exnuptial paternity acknowledged	21 966	16 520	18 432	5 981	9 364	2 522	1 577	1 103	77 471
Median age of mother (years)									
All confinements	31.0	31.7	30.0	30.3	30.4	29.3	28.1	31.4	30.8
Nuptial	31.7	32.3	31.4	31.5	31.8	31.3	31.6	31.9	31.8
First nuptial	30.3	31.0	30.1	30.3	30.5	29.7	30.2	30.6	30.5
Exnuptial	27.6	28.8	26.4	26.6	26.6	25.6	25.3	28.3	27.2
Exnuptial paternity acknowledged	27.7	28.9	26.5	26.8	26.8	25.7	26.1	28.4	27.4
Median age of father (years)									
All fathers where age is known	33.3	33.7	32.2	32.7	32.9	31.6	31.6	33.2	33.1
Nuptial	33.9	34.2	33.4	33.7	34.1	33.2	34.0	33.7	33.9
First nuptial	32.5	32.9	32.1	32.4	32.6	31.8	32.3	32.3	32.5
Exnuptial paternity acknowledged	30.3	31.3	29.1	29.8	29.5	28.4	28.9	30.7	30.0
Median duration of marriage (years)									
Nuptial	4.3	4.4	4.1	4.3	4.1	4.0	3.9	4.3	4.3
First nuptial	2.3	2.5	2.2	2.4	2.2	2.2	1.9	2.4	2.3
Previous children of the current relationship(i)									
0	26 117	21 111	12 771	4 844	7 135	1 281	523	1 454	75 245
1	22 149	16 356	11 654	4 258	6 221	1 197	454	1 164	63 460
2	9 314	6 476	4 931	1 653	2 647	509	212	385	26 129
3	2 714	1 709	1 472	458	765	159	66	140	7 483
4	767	467	451	87	189	39	13	31	2 045
5 and over	498	343	319	79	163	35	12	16	1 465
Average number of children of the current relationship(i)	1.89	1.83	1.94	1.86	1.90	1.95	1.93	1.81	1.88

(a) For Tasmania, some characteristics of births are not collected for the birth notification. See paragraphs 4–6 of the Explanatory Notes for further information.

(b) Includes Other Territories.

(c) Births per 1,000 women.

(d) Includes births to mothers aged less than 15 years.

(e) Includes births to mothers aged 50 years and over.

(f) Births per woman.

(g) Daughters surviving to reproductive age per woman.

(h) Coverage of Indigenous births varies between states and territories. See chapter 3 and table 9.1.

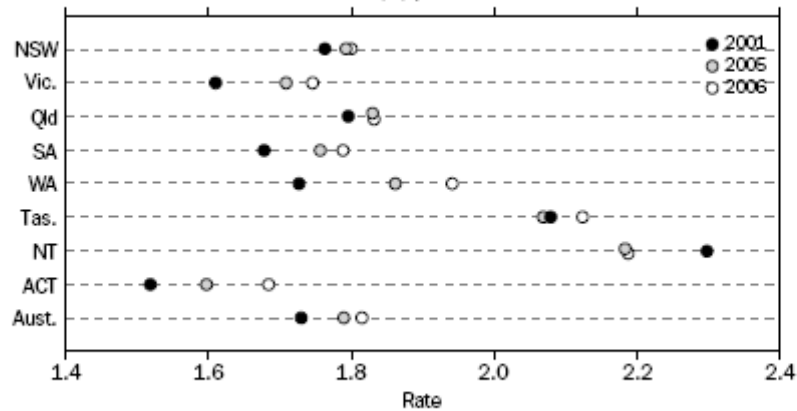
(i) Nuptial confinements only.

2.12 BIRTHS REGISTERED, States and territories—2005 and 2006

	CHANGE			
	2005	2006	2005-2006	2005-2006
	no.	no.	no.	%
New South Wales	86 589	87 336	747	0.9
Victoria	63 287	65 236	1 949	3.1
Queensland	51 661	52 665	1 004	1.9
South Australia	17 800	18 260	460	2.6
Western Australia	26 253	27 776	1 523	5.8
Tasmania	6 308	6 475	167	2.6
Northern Territory	3 659	3 696	37	1.0
Australian Capital Territory	4 206	4 479	273	6.5
Australia(a)	259 791	265 949	6 158	2.4

(a) Includes Other Territories.

2.10 TOTAL FERTILITY RATE(a), States and territories



(a) Births per woman.