

Women in the EU gave birth to their first child at almost 29 years of age

International Day of Families

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USPA NEWS - In 2013, a majority (51.2%) of women in the European Union (EU) gave birth to their first child when aged in their 20s, while 40.6% became mothers in their 30s, according Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union.

In addition, more than 127,000 births of first children in the EU in 2013 were to women aged less than 20 (teenage mothers) and around 65,500 to women aged 40 and over. On average, women in the EU were 28.7 years old when they became mothers for the first time. Among the 5.1 million births in the EU in 2013, nearly 1 in 5 (or more than 880,000) concerned a third or subsequent child.

On the occasion of the International Day of Families on 15 May 2015, Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union, publishes a selection of demographic data related to families in the EU. In 2013, the mean age of mothers at the birth of their first child varied significantly between the EU Member States, with a gap of almost five years between the youngest and the oldest. The youngest average ages of mothers at the birth of their first child were recorded in Bulgaria (25.7 years), Romania (25.8), Latvia (26.1), Estonia (26.5), Poland and Lithuania (both 26.7) and Slovakia (26.9).

Conversely, women were oldest on average when giving birth to their first child in Italy (30.6 years), followed by Spain (30.4), Luxembourg (30.0) and Greece (29.9). The highest shares of births of first children to teenage mothers were recorded in Romania (15.6% of total births of first children in 2013), Bulgaria (14.7%) and Hungary (11.0%), ahead of Slovakia (9.9%), Latvia (9.1%) and the United Kingdom (8.2%). On the other hand, the lowest shares were observed in Italy (1.8%), Slovenia (1.9%), the Netherlands (2.2%), Luxembourg and Cyprus (both 2.4%).

At the opposite end of the age range, the highest proportions of births of first children in 2013 to women aged 40 and over were registered in Italy (6.1% of total births of first children in 2013), Spain (5.1%), Greece (4.1%), Luxembourg (3.8%) and Ireland (3.4%). In contrast, shares of less than 1% were recorded in Poland and Slovakia (both 0.7%) and Lithuania (0.9%). In 2013, more than half of the women giving birth for the first time were aged in their 20s in a large majority of the EU Member States.

Notable exceptions were to be found in the following Member States where the majority of first births were to mothers aged in their 30s: Spain (59.4% of births of first children concerned women aged 30-39), Italy (54.1%), Ireland (52.7%) and Greece (51.9%). At EU level in 2013, more than 80% (82.6%) of births were first and second children, while births of third children accounted for 11.8% and of fourth or subsequent children for 5.6%. Across the EU Member States, the highest share of births ranked fourth or subsequent among total births was recorded in Finland (10.4%), followed by the United Kingdom (9.5%), Romania (9.4%) and Ireland (9.0%).

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:

United Press Association, Inc.

3651 Lindell Road, Suite D168

Las Vegas, NV 89103, USA

(702) 943.0321 Local

(702) 943.0233 Facsimile

info@unitedpressassociation.org

info@gna24.com

www.gna24.com