

# Twin Pregnancy and Birth Trends in Australia

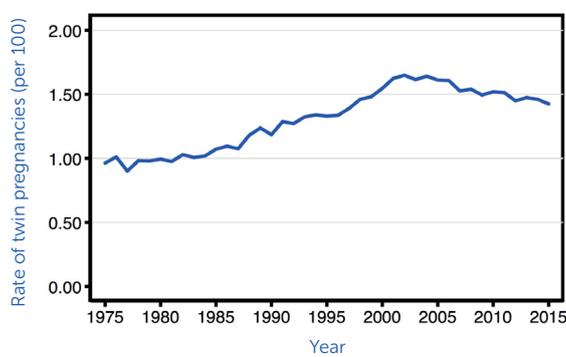
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Between 1975 and 2015, twin pregnancy rates in Australia increased overall. The likelihood of a twin pregnancy is influenced by factors such as a mother's age and ethnicity.

The following information is based on data from an Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) customised report<sup>1</sup> and a separate ABS dataset on twin pregnancies by state.<sup>2</sup>

Twin Pregnancy Rate: Australia, 1975–2015

Unpaired data

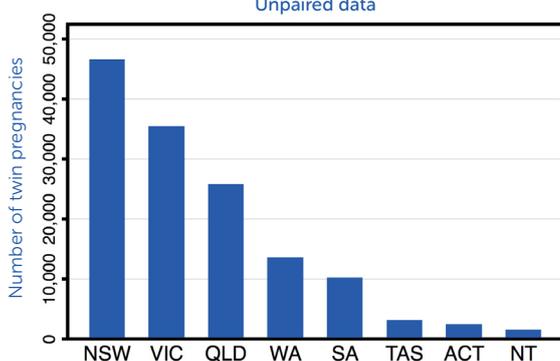


From 1975 to 2002, the twin pregnancy rate in Australia increased from 0.96 to 1.65 per 100 pregnancies.<sup>2</sup> This was partly due to the introduction of assisted reproductive treatment from around 1980.<sup>5</sup>

The fall in the twin pregnancy rate coincides with the increase in the proportion of ART cycles using single embryo transfers from 32.0% in 2003 to 63.7% in 2007<sup>3</sup> and 69.6% in 2010 to 82.9% in 2014.<sup>4</sup>

Number of Twin Pregnancies by State: Australia, 1975–2015

Unpaired data

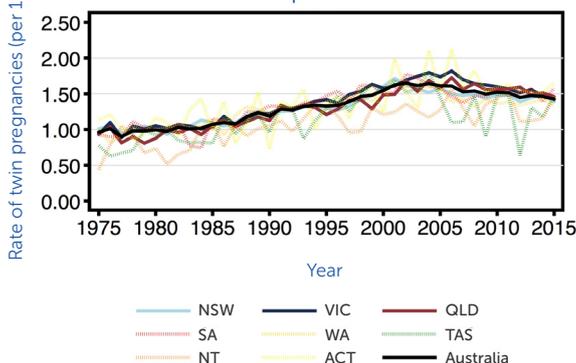


The largest states, New South Wales (NSW), Victoria (VIC) and Queensland (QLD), have been the main contributors to the number of twin pregnancies.<sup>2</sup>

The smallest numbers of twin pregnancies were in Tasmania (TAS), the Northern Territory (NT) and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). This distribution is similar to that of the general population.

Rate of Twin Pregnancies by State: Australia, 1975–2015

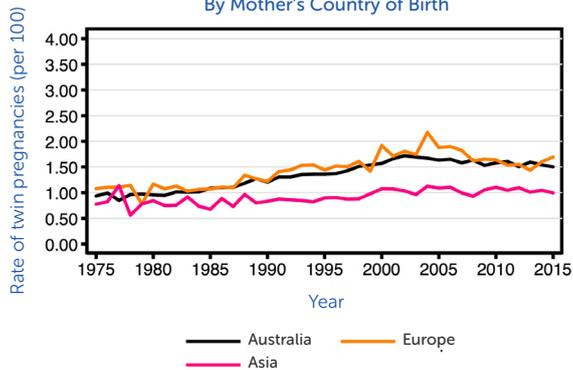
Unpaired data



This graph shows twin pregnancy rates based on the usual residence of the mother. The largest states, NSW, VIC and QLD had similar trends over time.<sup>2</sup> In the Northern Territory and Tasmania, the twin pregnancy rate often fell below the national rate.

### Australian Twin Pregnancy Rates: 1975–2015

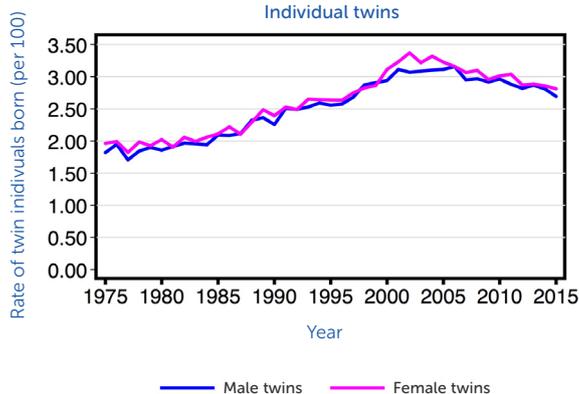
By Mother's Country of Birth



Twin pregnancy rates vary according to ethnicity. The twin pregnancy rate among European-born mothers has often been slightly above the overall Australian twin pregnancy rate.<sup>1</sup> In contrast, the twin pregnancy in Asian-born mothers has been under the national rate.

### Twin Birth Rate by Sex: Australia, 1975–2015

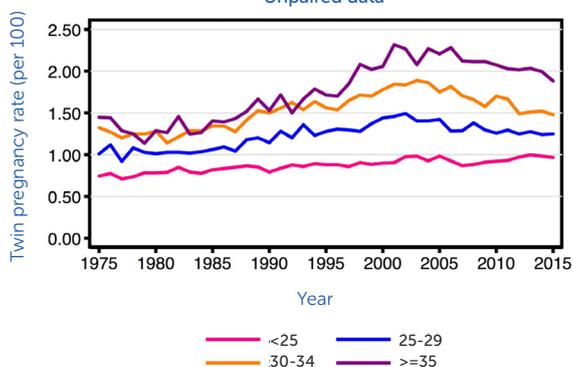
Individual twins



The rate of males born has been slightly lower than that of females in twin births.<sup>1</sup> The proportion of males is lower in twin births compared with single births and lower in triplet births compared with twin births.<sup>6</sup>

### Twin Pregnancy Rates by Mother's Age: Australia, 1975–2015

Unpaired data



The highest rates of twin pregnancy are among mothers aged 35+ years. The twin pregnancy rate then decreases by decreasing maternal age.<sup>1</sup>

Over the last forty years, Australia has seen an increase in twin pregnancy rates. This trend has partly been influenced by the use of assisted reproductive treatment and increasing maternal age. Variation in twin pregnancy rates have also been observed in mother's country of birth and maternal age, amongst other factors.

## References

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics (released 23 September 2016, 11:30am). *Twins data: customised report, 1975–2015*. Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics.
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5. Victorian Assisted Reproductive Treatment Authority. (2017). *History of Victorian ART regulation*. Retrieved from: <https://www.varta.org.au/>
6. Umstad, M. P. & Lancaster, P. L. (2005). Multiple Births in Australia. In I. Blickstein & L. G. Keith (Eds.), *Multiple Pregnancy: Epidemiology, Gestation & Perinatal Outcome*, 2nd ed (pp.26–32). Florida, CRC Press.