

Indicator **8. Births to Unmarried Women, International Comparisons**

**Births to unmarried women as a percentage of all live births in selected countries: 1960 to 1992**

Country	1960	1970	1980	1990	1992	Percent change in live births, 1960 to 1992	
						To all women	To unmarried women
United States	5.3	10.7	18.4	28.0	30.1	-4.1	446.6
Belgium	2.1	2.8	4.1	—	—	-19.2	—
Canada	4.3	9.6	11.3	—	—	—	—
Denmark	7.8	11.0	33.2	46.4	46.4	-11.0	427.9
France	6.1	6.8	11.4	30.1	<sup>1</sup> 33.2	-8.9	396.0
Germany	7.6	7.2	11.9	15.3	14.9	-35.9	26.3
Greece	1.2	1.1	1.5	2.2	2.6	-33.8	40.9
Ireland	1.6	2.7	5.0	14.6	18.0	-15.1	860.6
Italy	2.4	2.2	4.3	6.5	<sup>1</sup> 6.8	-38.4	72.4
Japan	1.2	0.9	0.8	—	—	—	—
Luxembourg	3.2	4.0	6.0	12.9	12.7	2.6	311.9
Netherlands	1.3	2.1	4.1	11.4	12.4	-17.7	658.2
Portugal	9.5	7.3	9.2	14.7	16.1	-46.2	-8.5
Spain	2.3	1.4	3.9	9.6	—	-40.9	—
Sweden	11.3	18.4	39.7	—	—	—	—
United Kingdom	5.2	8.0	11.5	27.9	30.8	-14.9	402.7

—Data not available.

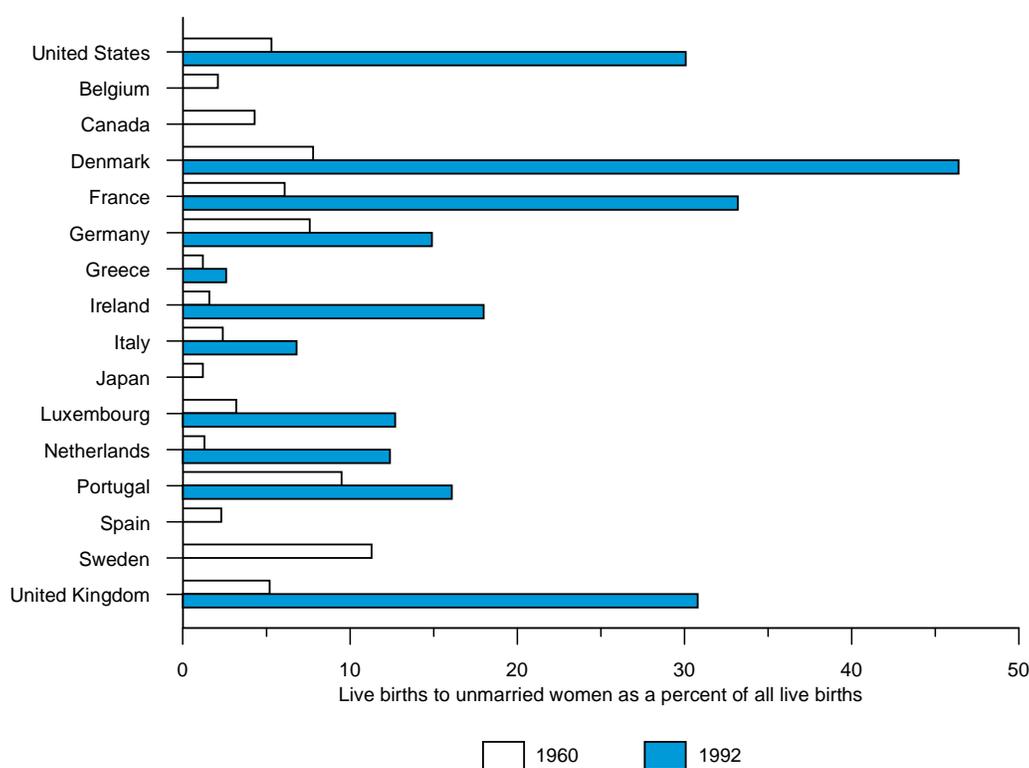
<sup>1</sup> Provisional data.

**NOTE:** Some data have been revised from previous years.

**SOURCE:** Statistical Office of the European Communities, *Demographic Statistics, 1988, 1990, and 1994*; and various national sources. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Center for Health Statistics, *Monthly Vital Statistics Report*, various years.

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**SOURCE:** Statistical Office of the European Communities, *Demographic Statistics, 1988 and 1994*; and various national sources, 1990.

Since 1960, the number of births has dropped in many industrialized countries, but the decline has been less severe in the United States. The number of births fell by 4 percent in the United States between 1960 and 1992, but it plunged by 36 percent in Germany and 38 percent in Italy.

While birth rates in many countries dropped, the number and proportion of births to unmarried women rose rapidly. This is also true for the United States. Countries vary widely in the proportion of births to unmarried women. For example, in Greece, 3 percent of the 1992 births were to unmarried women compared with 46 percent in Denmark. The proportion of births to unmarried women in the United States (30 percent) is comparable to France (33 percent) and the United Kingdom (31 percent).