

Terminations of Pregnancy Statistics



Year ending December 2016

Publication date – 30 May 2017

About this release

This release from the Information Services Division (ISD) provides an annual update on Abortion Statistics to December 2016. These data are derived from the Notifications to the Chief Medical Officer for Scotland under the Abortion Act 1967.

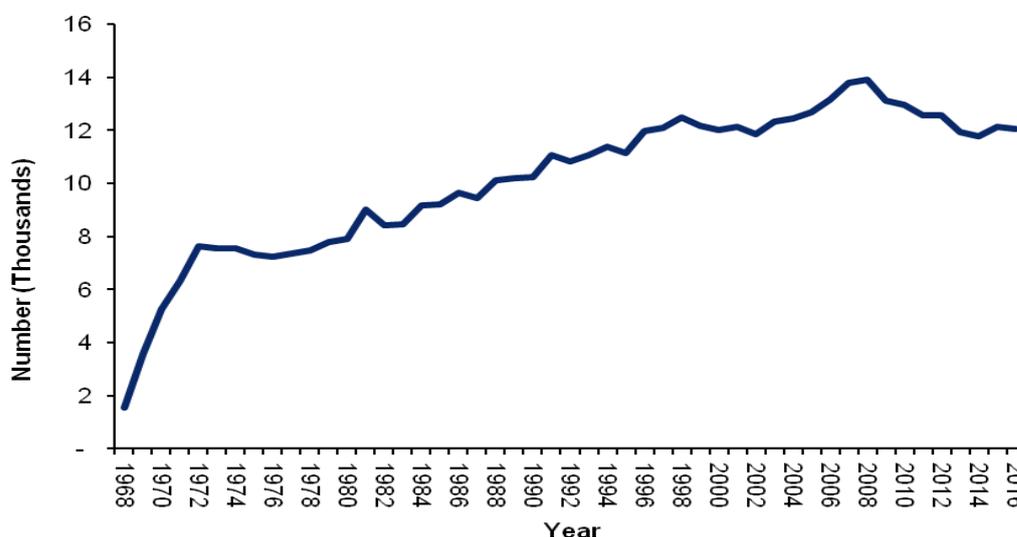
Information is provided by age, gestation, method of termination, NHS Board of residence, deprivation category, previous termination and ground for termination.

Data for England & Wales are also included for comparison, however, 2016 data will not be available until 13 June 2017.

Main Points

- The number of terminations of pregnancy in Scotland in 2016 was 12,063; down from 12,134 in 2015, remaining below the 2008 peak of 13,908 terminations.

Terminations of pregnancy performed in Scotland 1968 – 2016



- For the third successive year the lowest termination rate was in the under 16 age group. The under 16 rate has decreased year on year since 2009.
- Since 2013, a widening gap in termination rates has been evident between women from the most and least deprived areas. In 2016 termination rates for women in the most deprived areas was twice as high as those from the least deprived areas.

- Although the number of terminations performed under Ground E (there is substantial risk that if the child were born it would suffer from such physical or mental abnormalities as to be seriously handicapped) accounted for less than 2% of all terminations performed in Scotland, this has steadily increased from 136 in 2011 to a high of 214 in 2016.

Background

An abortion is defined as a termination of pregnancy and is either induced (therapeutic) or spontaneous (miscarriage). The termination of pregnancy statistics reports on induced abortions only. A termination of pregnancy can be performed surgically (eg vacuum aspiration, dilation and curettage) or medically. Medical methods of termination are carried out using drugs such as mifepristone (an antiprogesterone) and misoprostol (a prostaglandin).

There is a legal requirement to notify the Chief Medical Officer in Scotland of all terminations carried out in Scotland. ISD is responsible for the collation of data derived from notifications of abortions on behalf of the Chief Medical Officer in Scotland.

All notifications are validated prior to analysis. Data quality is considered to be high, although occasional omissions and administrative errors in submitting notification forms are inevitable, leading to some under-reporting. All late submissions of notification forms are included in the following year's statistics release as revised figures.

Contact

Samantha Clarke
Senior Information Analyst
0131 275 6149

Kirsten Monteath
Senior Information analyst
0131 275 6839

Email: Nss.isdmaternity@nhs.net

Further Information

The data from this publication is available to download [from our web page](#).

Further details are available in the full publication report: [Termination of Pregnancy Statistics 2016](#).

The next release of this publication (terminations performed in 2017) is scheduled for May 2018.

ISD and Official Statistics

Information Services Division (ISD) is the principal and authoritative source of statistics on health and care services in Scotland. ISD is designated by legislation as a producer of 'Official Statistics'. Our official statistics publications are produced to a high professional standard and comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. [Further information about our statistics](#).