

CHINA'S RECENT FERTILITY DECLINE: EVIDENCE FROM RECONSTRUCTED FERTILITY STATISTICS

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I.N.E.D | Population (english edition)

**2010/3 - Vol. 65
pages 451 à 478**

ISSN 1634-2941

Article disponible en ligne à l'adresse:

<http://www.cairn.info/revue-population-english-2010-3-page-451.htm>

Pour citer cet article :

Zhao Zhongwei et Zhang Xiaomu , « China's Recent Fertility Decline: Evidence from Reconstructed Fertility Statistics »
,
Population (english edition), 2010/3 Vol. 65, p. 451-478. DOI : 10.3917/pope.1003.0451

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Table 5 lists estimated TFRs, ASFRs and GFRs for years 1990 to 2005. When the estimated TFRs are compared with government-endorsed TFRs shown in Table 2, the two sets of TFRs were very close for years 1990 to 1997, but an increasing gap began to emerge from 1998: the estimated TFRs started to decline even though the officially adjusted figures remained at around 1.8. Our estimated TFR was close to the government-endorsed figure for 2004, while the government-reported TFR was noticeably higher than the estimated one for 2005.

**Table 5. Estimated general fertility rates (GFR),
age-specific fertility rates (ASFRs) and total fertility rates (TFR)
based on officially adjusted numbers of births, China, 1990-2005**

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
GFR (%)	78.05	72.54	67.15	66.48	64.93	62.92	62.47	60.76
ASFR								
15-19	0.017	0.020	0.013	0.015	0.007	0.008	0.010	0.006
20-24	0.190	0.200	0.189	0.179	0.172	0.170	0.174	0.157
25-29	0.159	0.127	0.111	0.120	0.129	0.130	0.129	0.140
30-34	0.056	0.035	0.039	0.042	0.043	0.038	0.038	0.043
35-39	0.016	0.010	0.009	0.008	0.009	0.008	0.009	0.009
40-44	0.007	0.002	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.002	0.002
45-49	0.001	0.000	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001
TFR	2.230	1.973	1.825	1.840	1.821	1.789	1.815	1.791
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
GFR (%)	57.31	53.71	51.57	49.09	47.00	45.16	44.61	44.88
ASFR								
15-19	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.007	0.006	0.007	0.006	0.007
20-24	0.157	0.144	0.139	0.124	0.123	0.125	0.126	0.130
25-29	0.132	0.130	0.130	0.131	0.120	0.113	0.117	0.116
30-34	0.044	0.046	0.046	0.050	0.053	0.052	0.054	0.054
35-39	0.011	0.011	0.010	0.011	0.011	0.012	0.013	0.015
40-44	0.002	0.001	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.003	0.002	0.003
45-49	0.001	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001
TFR	1.753	1.690	1.665	1.627	1.582	1.561	1.586	1.628
<i>Note:</i> The TFRs are computed from ASFRs for five-year age groups.								
<i>Sources:</i> Authors' calculations based on: <i>China Population Statistics Yearbook</i> (NBS, 2002 and 2003) for 1990-2001; <i>China Population Statistics Yearbook</i> (NBS, 2003-2006) for 2002-2005, officially reported adjusted figures.								

The close agreement between the two sets of TFRs for most of the 1990s were largely expected because our estimation was based on officially adjusted numbers of births and the statistical authority probably took the estimated birth total into consideration when they adjusted the TFR, especially in the