

SELECTED PAPERS ON THE DEMOGRAPHIC DEVELOPMENT IN BULGARIA

FERTILITY

Nasselenie Review, Volume 35, Number 2, 2017, 213-228

ISSN 0205-0617 (Print); ISSN 2367-9174 (Online)

<http://nasselenie-review.org>; e-mail: nasselenie_review@abv.bg

FREQUENCY OF MULTIPLE BIRTHS IN BULGARIA

Marta SUGAREVA

Plovdiv university "Paisii Hilendarski"

BULGARIA, Plovdiv 4000, "Tzar Assen" str. 24

✉ marta.sugareva@yahoo.com

Abstract. *The focus of study in this paper is the dynamics of multiple births in Bulgaria. The trends of these births are examined in several sub-periods, since 1881 (the earliest date when reliable statistics are available) until the present. Four sub-periods are revealed: 1) before 1910 – period of increase of the share of multiple births up to 1,5 per 1000 births; 2) 1920-1951 (the share is around 1 per 1000); 3) since 1951 to the beginning of the XXI century (below 1 per 1000); after 2005 – a strong trend of increase of the share of multiple births up to 1,7 per 1000).*

Keywords: multiple births; dynamics; frequency

The article can be cited as follows:

Sugareva, M. (2017). Chestotata na razhdaniyata na bliznatsi v Bulgaria. [Frequency of Multiple Births in Bulgaria *Nasselenie Review*, 2, 213-228.] ISSN 0205-0617 (Print); ISSN 2367-9174 (Online). (In Bulgarian).

© M. Sugareva, 2017

Submitted – December 2016

Revised – March 2017

Published – November 2017

The author has read and approved the final manuscript.

The number of multiple births in developed countries is growing. Through the 1970s (prior to the invention of the in vitro sterility treatment technology) UK's **twin birth rate** was 10 per 1000 confinements (i.e. 10‰) while in 2011 the twin birth rate had already grown to as many as 16‰ of all births. The relative share of twin births in the US for the same period grew from 9.5 per one thousand births to 16.9‰; in Germany, from 9.2 per one thousand to 17.2‰; in France, from 9.3‰ to 17.4‰; in Denmark, from 9.6‰ to 21.2‰. South Korea also experienced a drastic jump of twin births: from 5‰ to 14.6 per one thousand for a 40-year long period.

The largest growth of multiple births over the last few years has been observed in the US. According to data of the *US National Bureau for Health Statistics*, the US showed a share of multiple births equal to **3.4%**, or 1 of every 30 births on average was a twin birth (two, three, etc.) in 2015. This percentage is much higher in comparison with the cited relative shares registered in the European countries.

The policies in the US as to giving birth to three twins or multiple births of higher ranks is toward decrease as there is the opinion that such cases are accompanied by some risks both for children and for mothers. Besides, society bears a heavier financial burden connected with their raising as those children will most often need special medical care and social protection. (Armour KL, Callister LC, 2005).

The goal of this paper is to track the trends of twin births in Bulgaria as seen from a longer perspective, and to outline the specific features of contemporary processes in this area.

MULTIPLE BIRTHS IN BULGARIA AFTER 2000

The number of multiple births in Bulgaria over the period 2000-2015 (i.e. for mere 15 years) has grown from 627 in 2000 to 1109 in 2015 (a 77% increase). The same period saw a reduction in the overall number of births (from 73679 in 2000 to 65950 in 2015) so the growth of the relative share was faster than that of the absolute number. The relative share of the multiple births versus the total of all births has grown from 0.85‰ in 2000 to 1.68‰ in 2015, i.e. two-fold growth for a 15-year period (table 1).

Table 1
Number of births and number of multiple births in 2000 and 2015

	2000	2015
Births total	73679	66370
Including:		
Multiple births	627	1109
Relative frequency of multiple births (‰)	0.85	1.68

Source: NSI Population Yearbook and own calculations.

There is obviously significant dynamics deserving the attention of researchers, which is why we turned to this topic. There is some other data relative to this topic which is found in a document issued by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (table 2).