



Induced abortions



Not full, but relatively reliable data are available on the number of induced abortions from the middle of the 1950s. The strict abortion practice of the previous period was based on provisions of the so-called 'Csemegi Codex' of 1878 which allowed the termination of pregnancy through induced abortion only on the basis of the strictest medical reasons. Under a law in force for 75 years, the Rátkó's (minister of health) ministerial order introduced in 1953 punished illegal abortion with imprisonment. The strict prohibition was in effect for only one year, was eased already in 1954, and from June 1956, induced abortions were essentially allowed unconditionally on the mother's request. The number of induced abortions began to rise suddenly and spectacularly; it more than doubled from 35.4 thousand in 1955 to 82.5 thousand in 1956, and after that, it still grew dynamically until the end of the 1960s. The number of induced abortions, which can be considered already full-scope and is well documented, peaked in 1969 when more than 206 thousand abortions were carried out over one year. In parallel with the wide-ranging approval of induced abortions, the number of live births began to decline sharply, as a result of which, in the beginning of the 1960s, the birth rate was the lowest in Hungary worldwide in the period after the 2nd World War. In each of the 15 years between 1959 and 1973, the number of induced abortions was higher than that of children born in the given year. A significant change in this respect was brought about by the population measures in 1974, which, while encouraging childbearing, introduced certain restrictions in the area of allowing abortions. In addition, the supply and availability of modern contraceptive products expanded. Since 1974, although to varying degrees, but the number of births has exceeded that of abortions every year. The 'baby boom' in the mid-1970s was partly due to tightening the procedure of abortion approval, but the increased childbearing of the large generations born 20 years earlier and entering childbearing age also contributed to the rise in the number of births.

Further data, information (links)

[Tables](#)

[Methodology](#)

[Graphs](#)

Contact details:

kommunikacio@ksh.hu

[Contact us!](#)

Telephone: +36 (1) 345 6789