

Improving knowledge regarding abortions performed on Irish women in the UK

Steve Clements and Roger Ingham

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Foreword

This report provides an historical analysis of abortion data relating to residents of Ireland, Northern Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales over the period 1975 – 2005. The detailed analysis in this report provides the Crisis Pregnancy Agency and those reviewing the report, with an insight into how abortion patterns may vary across countries and how they have changed over time. Data for women from Ireland are based on those who travelled to UK abortion clinics and supplied Irish addresses. The analyses in this report are based on data notifications held by the Department of Health in the UK.

The detailed analysis in this report provides the Crisis Pregnancy Agency and those reviewing the report, with an insight into how abortion patterns may vary across countries and how they have changed over time. It is interesting to note that the abortion rate for Ireland has been decreasing since 2001. Recent reports suggest that since 2006 women may be travelling to countries other than the UK for termination of pregnancy. This report will be especially useful given that it covers the period 1975 – 2005 when the vast majority of women who travelled from Ireland to avail of abortion services did so to the UK.

I would like to thank the authors of the report Steve Clements and Professor Roger Ingham for their conscientious and meticulous approach to analysing this bank of data. I would also like to express my gratitude to staff in the abortion statistics section of the Department of Health in the UK for their assistance and cooperation in providing data to the report authors. Finally, I would like to thank BPAS, MSI, Calthorpe and South Manchester clinics for the time and assistance they provided to the report authors.

Caroline Spillane, *Director, Crisis Pregnancy Agency*

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1.0 Introduction

The overall aim of this study was to provide detailed statistics on women who travel from Ireland¹ to Great Britain for an abortion. This was done by using data on abortion notifications held by the Department of Health in London, plus data available from internal databases of major independent abortion providers².

This document provides a historical analysis of abortion data relating to residents of Ireland, Northern Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales with respect to overall rates, age, gestation, provider, place of termination and marital status³. The analysis aimed to identify how abortion patterns may vary across these countries and if and how they have changed over time.

2.0 Legal status of abortion in Ireland, Northern Ireland and Great Britain

In England, Scotland and Wales the Abortion Act 1967 is the law that governs abortions. According to this Act abortions can legally be performed under certain conditions – usually where the risk to a woman’s physical or mental health or the risk to her child(ren)’s physical or mental health will be greater if she continues with the pregnancy than if she ends it.

Irish women have availed of abortion services in Great Britain since the reform of the abortion law there in 1967, due to the legal restrictions that exist on obtaining an abortion in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

In Ireland abortion is only legally available where the life of the mother is at risk. However, women residing in Ireland are legally entitled to travel to other countries to obtain an abortion. In Ireland the law states that women may receive information on abortion services legally available in other countries if this information is solicited through non-directive counselling, during which other crisis pregnancy options are discussed. Women cannot be directly referred for abortion.

In Northern Ireland the exact legal position surrounding the provision of abortion is unclear. Abortions are performed where continuing with the pregnancy would have a severe effect on the mental / physical health of a woman, but the lack of clear guidelines means that abortion is not routinely available.

1 In this report the use of Ireland refers to the sovereign southern part of the island of Ireland that is governed from Dublin: that which is not Northern Ireland.

2 References to numbers are based on those providing addresses in Ireland or Northern Ireland, and therefore do not account for any women giving false addresses in Great Britain. This is now thought to be less common than was previously the case.

3 All reported abortions include both medical and surgical abortions.

3.0 Historical abortion trends

3.1 Data

The only data on abortion trends published for Irish women are published by the Department of Health (DH) in London. These cover abortions performed in England and Wales. No data are published in Scotland regarding Irish women. The latest publication (Department of Health 2006) contains the overall number of abortions performed on Irish Republic residents and numbers by age and gestation. Prior to 2002 data were published by the Office for National Statistics. The Department of Health subsequently changed the way in which the data were presented. Additionally, confidentiality concerns led to a National Disclosure Review (National Statistics 2005) that recommended, amongst other changes, that counts between zero and nine were suppressed (not published). This has restricted the number of age and gestation categories now used in the publications by the Department of Health.

It was agreed with the Crisis Pregnancy Agency that the historical analysis would cover the following years for Ireland and Northern Ireland - *1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2003 and 2004*. For England, Scotland and Wales the years were *1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2003 and 2004*. Where possible, abortion figures for 2005 have been included.

The required data for the historical analysis have been compiled from data currently held by the Crisis Pregnancy Agency, previous publications of the DH, the Office for National Statistics and the Information and Statistics Division (ISD) in Scotland. However, the majority of the data were provided directly by the Department of Health under the specific approval of the Chief Medical Officer for England. This was because of the disclosure regulations highlighted above. Consequently, these data were provided subject to a confidentiality agreement, where values between zero and nine and all values for each place of abortion must be suppressed.

ISD were also contacted to provide some outstanding data for Scotland, which they subsequently provided. However, it was agreed not to pursue them for additional detailed data to match the categories used in the presentation of data by the DH. Key informants have also been contacted regarding clarification of issues raised in the data collection.

Female population estimates by age have been collated for each nation for the required time points from official sources (Ireland: Central Statistics Office; Northern Ireland: Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency; England, Scotland and Wales: Office for National Statistics).

3.2 Findings: Abortion rates

3.2.1 Historical rates for the UK and Ireland

Initial findings on abortion rates and numbers for each nation are detailed in Table 1 and displayed in Figures 1 and 2. Rates are used so that relative difference between the number of abortions for each nation can be compared by taking account of their differing population sizes. The rates calculated show the number of abortions per 1000 women aged 15-44 in the specific year. The data supplied for Ireland for 2003 and 2004 contained 35 abortions that were classified as 'Ireland not specified' – as opposed to

'Ireland' and 'Northern Ireland'. In the published statistics these have been classified as the Republic of Ireland. For consistency, and given the relatively few abortions involved, we have also followed this assumption.

Table 1: Abortion rates and numbers for each nation 1975-2005

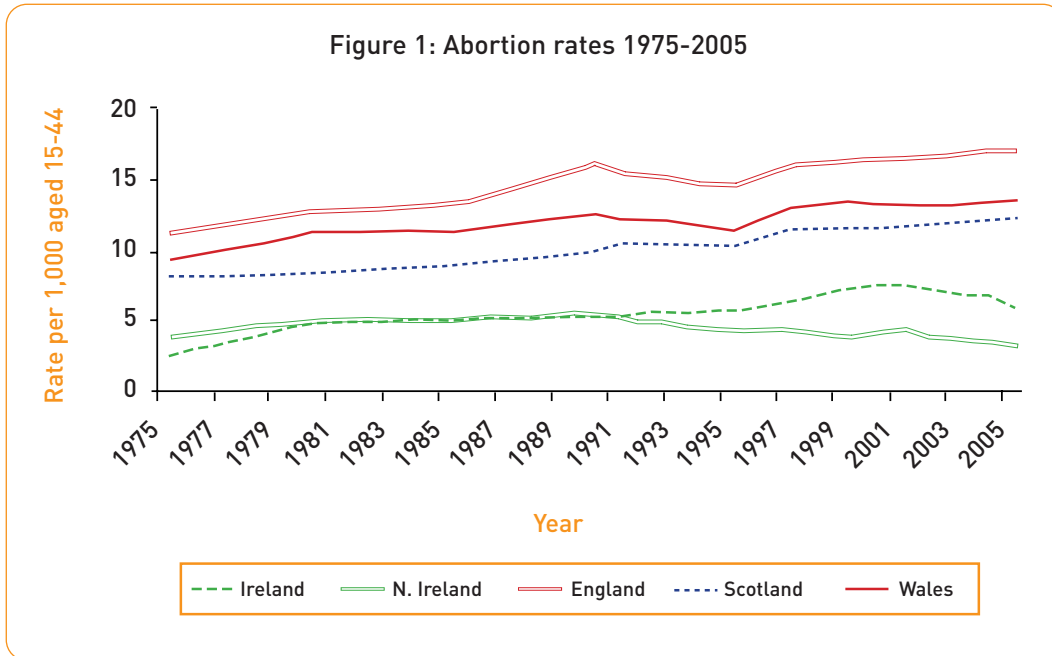
	Ireland			Northern Ireland			England			Scotland			Wales		
	rates	ASR*	No's	rates	ASR*	No's	rates	ASR*	No's	rates	ASR*	No's	rates	ASR*	No's
1975	2.58	2.34	1573	3.84	3.60	1115	11.20	10.66	101392	8.08	7.80	8343	9.21	8.92	4832
1980	4.82	4.48	3320	5.01	4.65	1565	12.69	12.23	122636	8.33	7.87	9056	11.19	10.82	6291
1985	5.16	4.90	3888	4.90	4.56	1637	13.21	12.66	134504	8.83	8.28	9902	11.30	10.89	6597
1990	5.29	5.20	4064	5.41	5.11	1855	16.00	15.76	166460	9.78	9.58	10982	12.51	12.44	7440
1991	5.35	5.28	4154	5.12	4.88	1775	15.41	15.26	160189	10.48	10.38	11758	12.13	12.13	7187
1993	5.55	5.46	4402	4.63	4.44	1629	14.84	14.73	150922	10.43	10.46	11500	11.99	12.07	6924
1995	5.59	5.48	4532	4.35	4.24	1548	14.58	14.63	147875	10.38	10.55	11422	11.27	11.46	6440
1997	6.38	6.27	5340	4.34	4.32	1572	16.02	16.39	162757	11.35	11.78	12409	12.96	13.35	7388
1999	7.25	7.11	6226	3.92	3.97	1430	16.29	16.91	166106	11.53	12.19	12488	13.36	13.93	7595
2000	7.34	7.19	6391	4.17	4.25	1528	16.40	17.13	168023	11.42	12.13	12324	13.12	13.69	7519
2001	7.53	7.35	6673	4.28	4.39	1577	16.40	17.16	168824	11.57	12.35	12451	13.15	13.75	7540
2003	6.87	6.66	6320	3.59	3.70	1318	16.78	17.60	173968	11.91	12.82	12631	13.17	13.76	7614
2004	6.67	6.47	6217	3.48	3.56	1280	17.08	17.92	177691	12.06	12.96	12763	13.32	13.87	7724
2005	5.88	5.71	5585	3.15	3.23	1164	17.05	17.82	178652	12.17	13.07	12853	13.39	13.92	7764

Annual rates per 1000 women aged 15-44. ASR – Age standardised rates

All abortions notified in England and Wales.

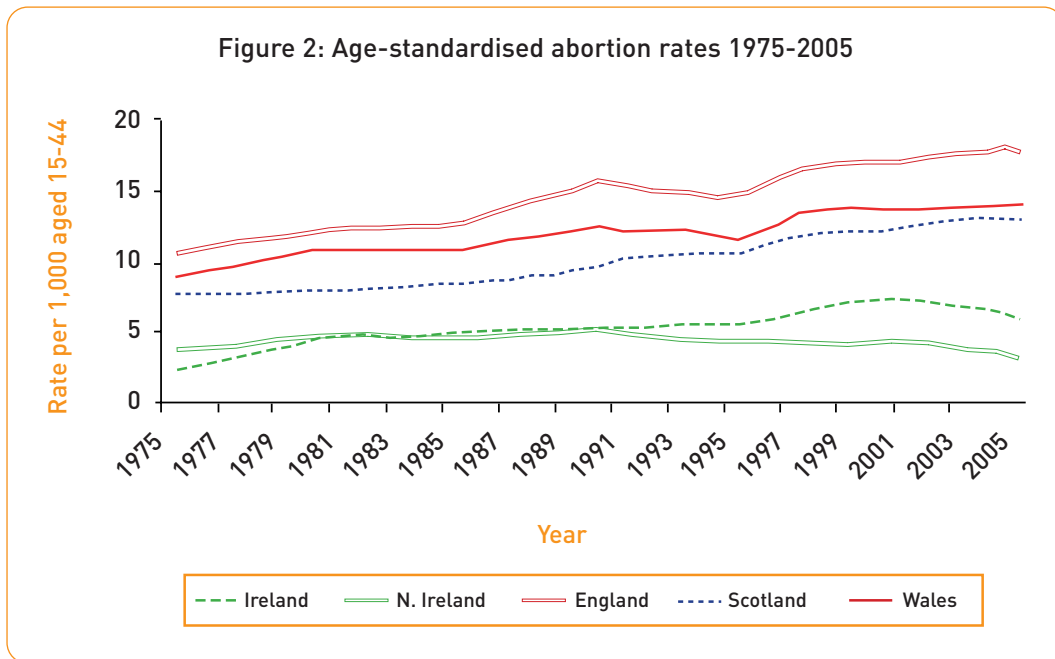
Scottish figures also include those notified in Scotland.

* The age standardised rate (ASR) adjusts for any changes in the age structure of the female population between 1975 and 2005. However, due to some missing age data in 1975, in particular, and 1980, the ASRs in these years are slightly lower than they should be. ASRs are used because the abortions are not distributed evenly across age groups and are, in fact, concentrated at younger ages. Consequently if the age structure is more youthful then the ASR will be lower than the non-adjusted rate; if the age structure is older then the ASR will be higher than the (non-adjusted) rate. These are the rates commonly quoted in Department of Health publications to ascertain real changes in the uptake of abortion after accounting for age.



Historically, England has always had the highest abortion rate in the UK, with Wales having the second highest - consistently above that for Scotland. Abortion rates will be higher in areas where both conception rates are higher and where women are more likely to abort than continue their pregnancies. The higher abortion rate in England has been linked by some commentators to England having a culture that is less opposed to abortion than some of its neighbours (Lee *et al.* 2004). All major independent-sector abortion centres are based in England, which may also contribute to the higher rates there. Conversely, the placement of clinics in England may be due to the greater demand for services because of England's higher rate of abortion. The lowest rates among the countries under examination for the purposes of this study occur in Northern Ireland and Ireland. Their abortion rates were similar up to 1990 (around five per 1000); since then, the Ireland rate has increased (6.7 in 2004) whereas the Northern Irish rate has decreased (3.5 in 2004).

Age-standardised abortion rates



It is noteworthy that the ASRs in Table 1 are broadly similar to the crude rates. The current difference between Northern Irish and Irish rates is reduced slightly once the population structure is accounted for. Increases over time within Great Britain are greater, due to a transition from a relatively youthful reproductive population of women to a relatively older one. This is particularly noticeable in Scotland.

The age-standardised abortion rate for Ireland decreased substantially by 12 per cent, from 6.5 to 5.7, between 2004 and 2005. This is contrary to trends in Great Britain, but not Northern Ireland. It is not wholly clear why this has happened. The birth rate only fell by three per cent over this period (Central Statistics Office 2006), indicating that the reduction in the abortion rate is not wholly related to a decline in conceptions. The abortion decline appears to have occurred across all ages, except among those aged 40+ (Table 2). However, the distribution by place of abortion varies, as illustrated later (see section 3.7). Many places of abortion in Great Britain have seen a fall in the number of abortions to Irish women, but some have seen increases. This indicates changing routes of access, which may also include travel to other countries, and hence fewer Irish abortions performed in England and Wales. For example, anecdotal evidence from some service providers suggests that some women are travelling to other countries, such as the Netherlands, where the cost of an abortion is lower than in the UK.

Since 1998, statistics on abortions performed within Northern Ireland have been made available from in-patient hospital records. These are defined by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in Northern Ireland as ‘the interruption of pregnancy for legally acceptable, medically approved indications’ (Sexual Health Information 2004). Seventy-one abortions were performed in 1999/2000 and 83 in 2000/01 (Sexual Health Information 2004), whilst 67 were performed in 2003/04 (fpa 2005). The additional abortions performed in Northern Ireland would make little difference to the

non-adjusted abortion rate there. For example, in Table 1 an additional 100 abortions in 2004 would give an overall rate of 3.7 compared with the existing figure of 3.48.

There are no major independent abortion providers in Scotland. Consequently, evidence suggests that few women travel to Scotland from Ireland for abortions. In Scotland, between 1977 and 2004, 51 abortions were performed on Irish residents and 67 on Northern Irish residents. This information was supplied by ISD who stated that an unknown number of women give false addresses, typically of hotels in ferry ports.

3.2.2 Factors affecting abortion rates in Ireland and Northern Ireland

It is not entirely clear why the abortion rate in Northern Ireland has remained fairly stable, whilst the number of women travelling from the Republic has greatly increased. Possible reasons for the increase in the Republic's abortion rate are discussed below.

Economic climate

Recent years have seen dramatic growth in Ireland's economy, which has led it to become known as the 'Celtic Tiger' (Oaks 2003). The rise in abortions to Irish women, up to 2001, can be considered within this context of economic growth and consequent social change in challenging traditional attitudes.

More women are now working and are financially independent, balancing the decision to have a family with career progression (Mahon *et al.* 1998). Mahon *et al.* (1998) also argue that state family policies have failed to keep pace with changes in gender roles. This means that it is harder for women to combine work and motherhood, thus women may be delaying or rejecting motherhood in favour of progressing their careers and personal ambitions (Mahon *et al.* 1998); such women may choose to have an abortion in the event of a crisis pregnancy situation.

By contrast, Northern Ireland has seen much conflict in past decades, and the economic climate has been poor (though it has improved steadily over the past decade (Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment Northern Ireland 2005)). This may explain the earlier stagnation in abortion rates, as prosperity tends to decrease the number of births through 'opportunity costs of childbearing' (Joshi 1996) and hence increase the attractiveness of abortion. However, it doesn't explain the decline in the abortion rate in Northern Ireland in recent years. Fertility has declined from 2.68 children per woman in 1975 to 1.87 in 2004 (National Statistics 2006). This indicates that fertility decline started earlier than in the Republic but that, given the level of fertility, similar issues relating to childbearing decision-making must exist for women in the North. However, there has been no decline in the number of children per woman over the period 2001 to 2005 (National Statistics 2006), when the number of abortions fell by approximately 25 per cent. This could suggest that women may be travelling elsewhere for abortions e.g. the Netherlands. It doesn't tend to suggest a significant decline in conceptions as this would be likely to affect the birth rate too.

Attitudes to abortion

The economic changes in the Republic of Ireland have occurred alongside significant changes in Irish societal attitudes. Up until recently both public policy on sex and individual

sexual behaviour were strongly influenced by Catholic moral teaching. Even today, both Northern Ireland and the Republic hold conservative views on sexual issues by European standards (European Values Survey 1999-2000 in Layte, Fullerton and McGee 2003) and there is evidence that stigma and taboo still surround abortion in Ireland, with many women keeping their abortions a secret (Conlon 2005). Rossiter and Sexton (2001) note that in Northern Ireland alternative reasons - such as shopping trips to London - are often given for journeys to abortion clinics in England. Similar experiences are reported by women from south of the border (Irish Family Planning Association 2000).

However, the increase in international travel - both to and from Ireland - and increased access to information through the mass media have contributed to a liberalisation of sexual attitudes. Pre-marital sex was adjudged to be always wrong by 71% of the Irish population in 1973, in 1994 the proportion had fallen to 32% and in a 2005 study the proportion was 6% (reported in Layte, McGee, Quail and Rundle 2006: p98). With regard to abortion, a recent population study of Irish Republic residents demonstrated that attitudes to abortion have undergone a significant change since the early 80s, with between 30-50% of respondents aged 18-64 (depending on the age range) feeling that abortion was 'always wrong/never justified' in 2005, compared with a range of 70-90% feeling that abortion was 'always wrong/never justified' in 1981 (Layte, Rundle, Leigh, McGee *et al.* 2005). So, whilst some Irish women may still feel a need to keep an abortion secret, the research suggests that women in Ireland are far less likely to be opposed to abortion as an option for resolving a crisis pregnancy than they would have been in the past.

Ease of access to services

The dramatic increase in women's personal and financial independence in Ireland, as well as more frequent and more affordable travel to the UK, have doubtless made travelling for an abortion from Ireland more straightforward than it would have been in the past. Moreover, since 1995 women in Ireland have been entitled to receive information on abortion services in the UK as part of a non-directive counselling session that discusses other options. Increased access to personal computers and the development of the internet have also improved access to information about abortion service providers. There has also been an increase in the number and geographical spread of sexual health and counselling services in Ireland in recent decades.

Differences in reporting actual addresses of residence by the women

It was often highlighted, particularly for past abortions to women from both Northern Ireland and Ireland, that a number may have given false British addresses because of the anti-abortion feelings that exist (Rossiter and Sexton 2001, Smyth 1992b, Northern Ireland Abortion Law Reform Association 1989). Thus, the actual number of abortions would be higher than the numbers indicated in the official statistics. However, the increasingly liberal views on sex and abortion in Irish society have led commentators to believe that the number of women giving false addresses is likely to be lower now than in the past. Consequently, past rises in rates (up to 2001) may partly be due to women's greater willingness to state they are from Ireland.

Summary

Economic and societal changes are likely to have contributed to the increase in the Irish abortion rate. The opportunity costs of childbearing are now far greater for women in 'Celtic Tiger' Ireland and so women may be more likely to opt for abortion in a crisis pregnancy situation. Moreover, not only are women less likely to be morally opposed to abortion as an option for resolving a crisis pregnancy than previously, it may also be the case that women from the Republic of Ireland are now more willing to give their real addresses to UK clinics, as widespread condemnation of abortion within Irish society has lessened in recent times.

As regards the difference in abortion rates between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, the most significant factor would appear to be the economic boom in the Republic, compared to the relative economic stagnation in Northern Ireland. Ireland has experienced greater growth in prosperity and more significant changes in fertility patterns as opposed to Northern Ireland. The latter is evidenced by the larger decline in birth rates in Ireland over this period and the decline in adoptions⁴.

It may also be that women from Northern Ireland are now travelling in greater numbers to abortion clinics in countries other than Great Britain - these abortions would not be included in the abortion rate calculations carried out for the current study. Opting to have an abortion in countries other than the UK would also explain the fall in the abortion rate in Ireland since 2001. The CPA is currently conducting a study to examine these patterns; initial findings suggest women began, in small numbers, to travel to other countries from 2005.

3.3 Findings: Abortions by age

Abortion rates per 1000 women in each age group are detailed for each nation in Tables 2 to 6 and displayed in Figures 3 to 7.

Table 2: Age-specific abortion rates - Ireland 1975-2005

	Under 16	16-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40+
1975	*	*	5.75	3.43	1.75	0.90	0.61
1980	0.16	3.81	10.38	6.15	3.45	2.48	1.29
1985	0.16	4.31	10.83	6.44	3.87	3.09	1.60
1990	0.18	5.04	11.52	7.00	4.07	3.03	1.44
1991	0.21	5.19	11.61	6.72	4.14	3.23	1.72
1993	0.37	4.83	12.11	7.39	4.32	3.02	1.80
1995	0.26	5.14	12.37	7.45	4.23	3.02	1.56
1997	0.40	5.86	13.61	9.32	4.77	3.39	1.65
1999	0.36	6.72	15.31	10.90	5.43	3.63	1.77
2000	0.30	6.58	14.52	11.38	6.09	3.87	1.77
2001	0.46	7.17	15.30	11.26	6.06	3.53	1.91
2003	0.50	6.58	12.47	10.03	6.11	3.92	1.89
2004	0.55	6.29	11.65	10.12	5.93	4.06	1.64
2005	0.47	5.66	10.35	8.36	5.24	3.57	1.92

Under 16 rates are calculated using the population aged 13-15

The 40+ rates are calculated using the population aged 40-44

* Suppressed

⁴ The number of women placing a child for adoption outside the family has steadily declined over the past 50 years. In 1976 there were 1005 'stranger' (non-family) adoptions in the Republic of Ireland; by 2002 this figure had fallen to 99 (Crisis Pregnancy Agency Statistical Report 2005 – McGrath, O'Keeffe and Smith 2005).

Table 3: Age-specific abortion rates – Northern Ireland 1975-2005

	Under 16	16-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40+
1975	0.59	5.22	7.06	3.49	2.95	2.32	1.29
1980	0.53	7.06	8.91	5.29	3.30	3.03	1.45
1985	0.78	6.61	9.18	5.14	3.63	2.59	1.06
1990	0.66	7.67	10.60	6.09	3.78	2.48	1.14
1991	0.36	7.07	10.05	6.11	3.57	2.54	1.13
1993	0.86	5.56	8.95	6.14	3.22	2.38	1.02
1995	0.59	5.66	8.51	5.60	3.32	2.06	1.15
1997	0.74	5.45	8.93	5.61	3.26	2.29	1.05
1999	0.56	4.91	7.97	5.17	3.28	2.12	1.07
2000	0.63	5.53	8.08	5.98	3.91	1.97	0.77
2001	0.86	5.63	8.48	5.75	3.66	2.53	0.90
2003	0.67	4.35	7.06	4.83	3.19	2.36	0.88
2004	0.44	4.02	5.81	4.75	3.84	2.37	1.11
2005	0.55	3.59	6.08	4.48	2.97	1.69	0.95

Under 16 rates are calculated using the population aged 13-15

The 40+ rates are calculated using the population aged 40-44

Table 4: Age-specific abortion rates – England 1975-2004

	Under 16	16-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40+
1975	3.2	17.7	15.2	11.1	9.9	7.7	3.9
1980	3.1	20.2	18.6	13.4	10.7	8.5	4.2
1985	3.7	21.9	20.7	14.7	10.5	7.1	3.2
1990	4.0	26.2	28.4	19.1	12.6	7.8	3.0
1995	3.5	21.7	25.6	18.8	12.8	8.1	3.2
2000	3.9	27.0	30.9	21.1	14.2	9.2	3.5
2003	3.9	26.4	31.6	22.4	14.8	9.6	3.9
2004	3.7	26.5	32.1	23.5	14.9	9.6	4.0

Under 16 rates are calculated using the population aged 13-15

The 40+ rates are calculated using the population aged 40-44

Table 5: Age-specific abortion rates – Scotland 1975-2004

	Under 20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40+
1975	11.1	11.3	8.1	6.8	6.5	3.0
1980	11.9	13.1	8.4	6.2	5.1	2.6
1985	14.1	14.3	9.2	6.2	4.1	1.8
1990	16.8	17.0	11.0	6.7	4.4	1.6
1995	16.7	19.5	12.4	8.0	4.8	2.0
2000	18.8	22.1	14.6	9.2	5.9	2.2
2003	20.1	23.7	15.7	9.6	5.5	2.3
2004	20.6	23.6	15.9	9.6	6.0	2.1

Under 20 rates are calculated using the population aged 15-19

Under 16 and 16-19 rates are not published in Scotland

The 40+ rates are calculated using the population aged 40-44

Table 6: Age-specific abortion rates – Wales 1975-2004

	Under 16	16-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40+
1975	2.3	14.5	11.5	8.7	9.0	7.5	3.9
1980	2.3	17.7	14.6	10.9	9.8	9.2	4.8
1985	3.2	19.8	16.0	12.4	8.7	6.8	3.6
1990	3.3	22.2	21.6	14.0	9.3	6.9	2.9
1995	3.7	18.7	20.8	14.1	8.7	5.8	2.4
2000	3.5	23.6	24.8	16.7	10.6	6.6	2.6
2003	3.9	22.2	25.1	17.7	10.8	6.6	2.4
2004	3.2	23.3	24.7	17.9	10.6	7.0	2.6

Under 16 rates are calculated using the population aged 13-15

The 40+ rates are calculated using the population aged 40-44

Figure 3: Age-specific abortion rates – Ireland 1975-2005

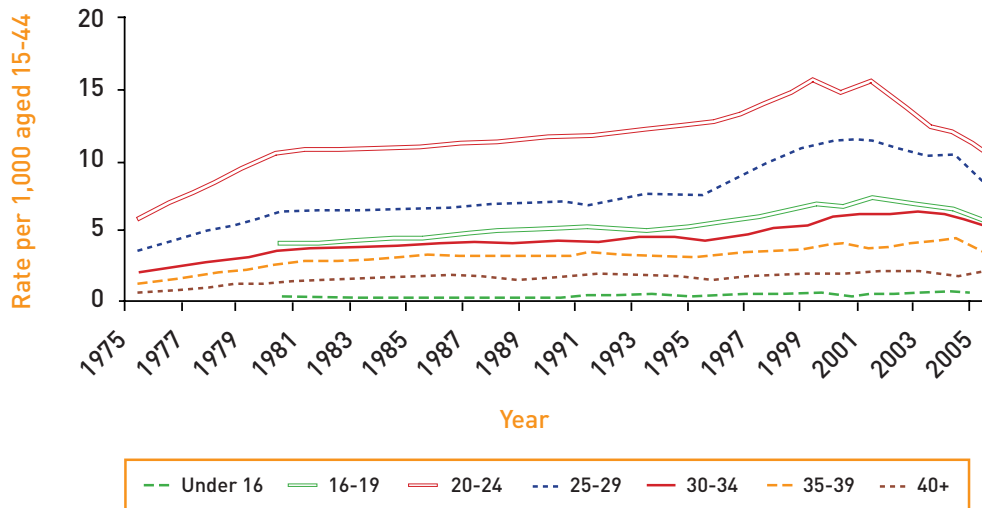
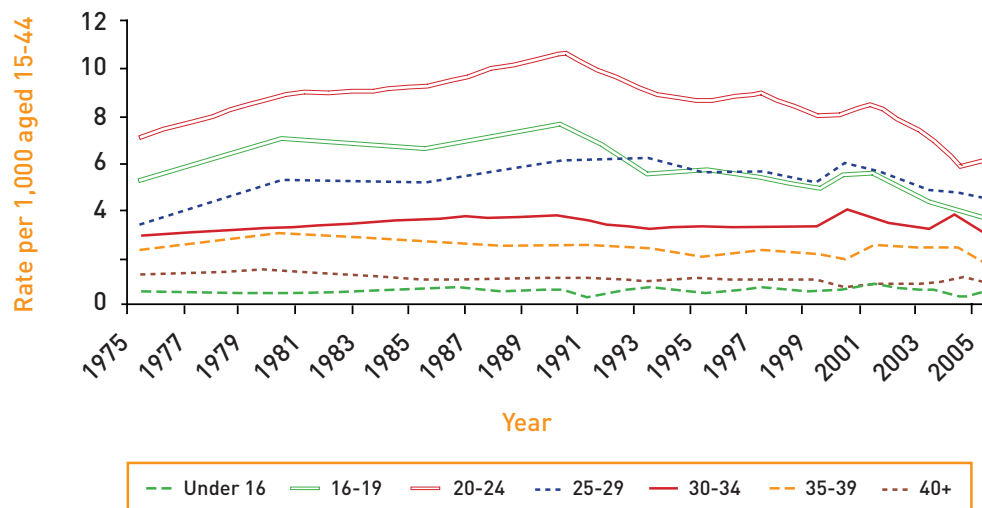
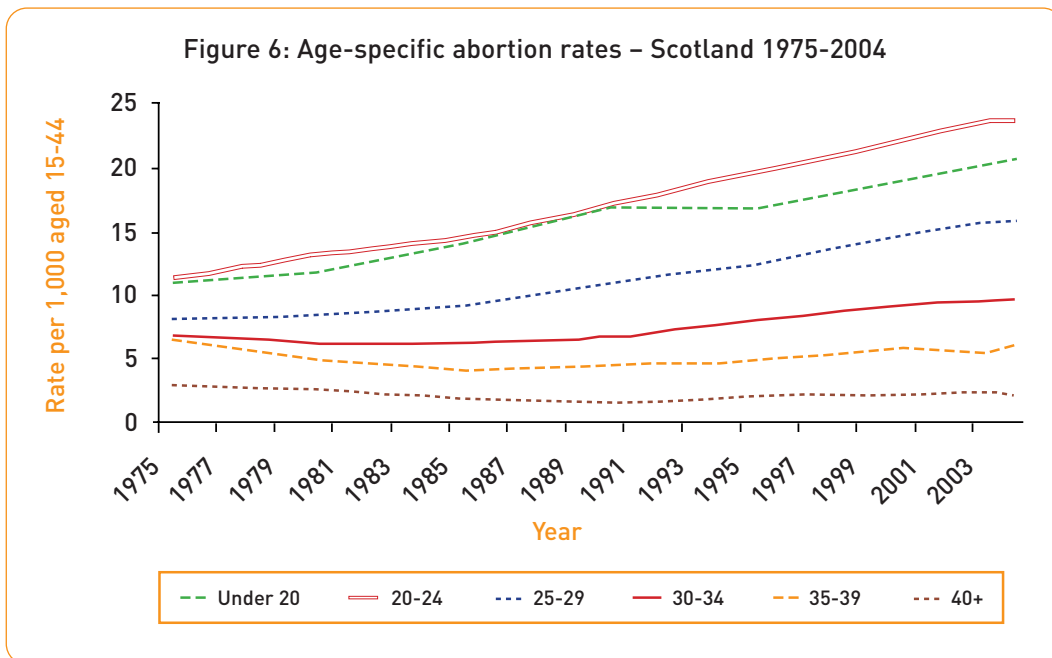
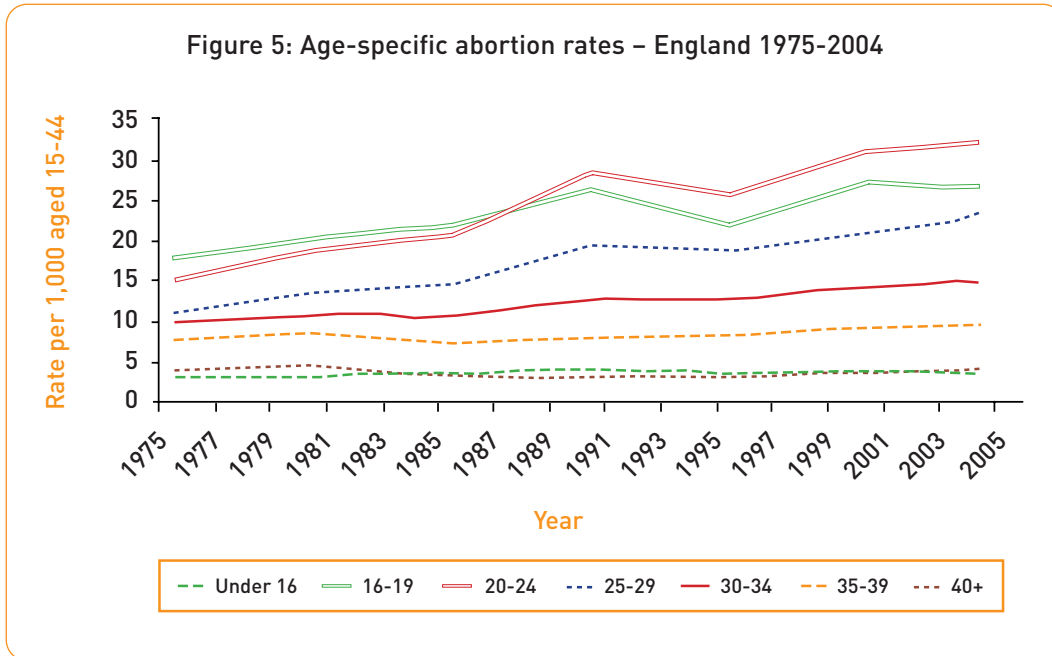
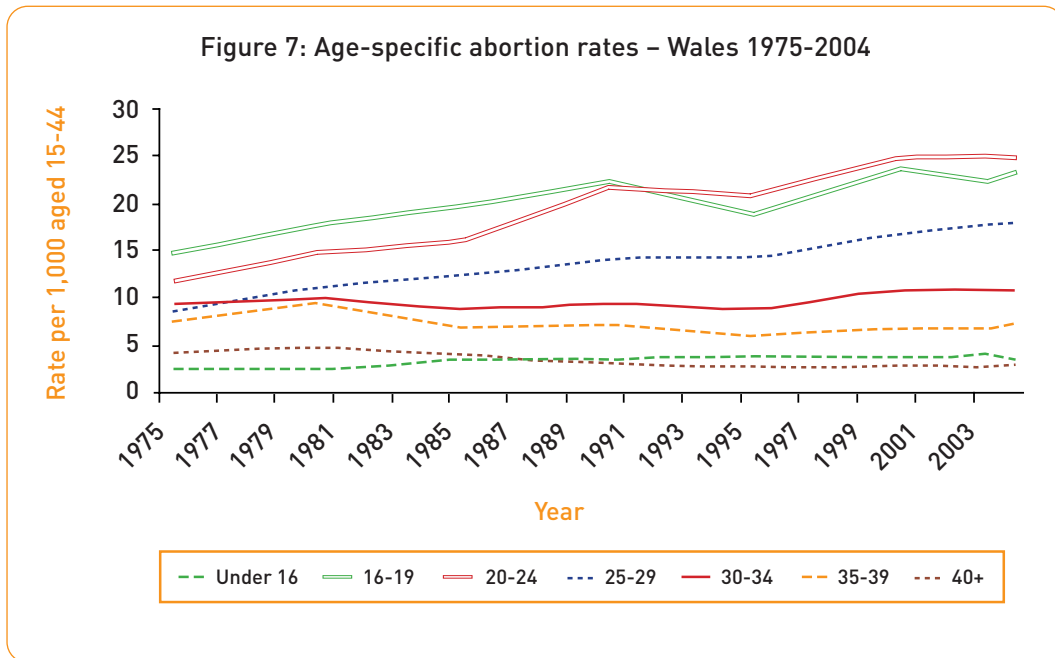


Figure 4: Age-specific abortion rates – Northern Ireland 1975-2005





Abortion patterns by age do vary by country, particularly between Ireland / Northern Ireland and those in Great Britain. For Ireland, rates have been consistently highest for the 20-24 year old age group, followed by the 25-29 year old group. 16-19 year olds are the third most prevalent group in terms of abortion rates. For Northern Ireland, 20-24 year olds have also consistently had the highest abortion rates. Historically the next highest were the 16-19 year olds, but since 1993 the 16-19 year old rate has been similar to that for 25-29 year olds. Rates for each age group for both Northern Ireland and Ireland typically show that the recent decline in abortions has occurred across most ages.



In Scotland, as in Ireland and Northern Ireland, the abortion rate has always been highest for the 20-24 age-group. In Scotland the next highest rate has always been the 'under 20' abortion rate, followed by the 25-29 year old rate. In England and Wales the difference between the 16-19 year old and 20-24 year old rates has been much smaller than in Ireland and Northern Ireland, with the 20-24 year olds recently taking over as the most prevalent rate, suggesting that the average age of abortion has increased in England and Wales. Overall, though, abortions tend to occur at younger ages in Great Britain (as opposed to Ireland).

The higher abortion rates within England and Wales at younger ages are also illustrated in Table 7. This shows the under-17 abortion rates for each nation except Scotland, where data were not available. The table was compiled as the age of consent to sexual intercourse for girls is 17 in Ireland and Northern Ireland, as opposed to 16 in Great Britain. Table 7 shows that in 2004 under 17s in England and Wales were six to seven times more likely to have an abortion than their counterparts in Ireland. Furthermore, as of 2004, under-17 abortion rates have become, for the first time, higher in Ireland than in Northern Ireland. This is primarily due to the increase in rates in Ireland. Rates in Northern Ireland remained fairly stable between 1975 and 2003: rates ranged between 2.24 and 3.36, with a fall to 1.85 in 2004. In Ireland the rate has increased nearly ten-fold – from 0.28 in 1975 to over 2 since 2001. However, it must be said that – even given the increase in the Irish rate – both the Northern Ireland rate and the Irish rate are low by international comparison.

3.4 Findings: Abortions by gestation

The percentage of abortions by gestation are detailed for each nation in Tables 8 to 12 and displayed in Figures 8 to 12. Data published in Scotland are available for slightly different gestation periods than those published by the Department of Health. Statistics

for England and Wales were not available separately prior to 1985 or for abortions performed on Scottish residents in England and Wales in 1975.

Table 7: Under-17 abortion rates 1975-2004

	Ireland	Northern Ireland	England	Wales
1975	0.28	2.49	12.44	
1980	0.80	2.66	12.31	
1985	0.83	3.21	14.27	
1990	0.99	2.66	14.78	
1991	0.99	2.30	-	
1993	1.21	2.94	-	
1995	1.27	2.48	12.24	
1997	1.41	2.56	-	-
1999	1.41	2.25	-	-
2000	1.78	2.24	14.6	12.8
2001	2.12	3.36	-	-
2003	2.18	2.50	14.6	13.9
2004	2.01	1.85	14.1	12.5

Under 17 rates are calculated using the population aged 15-16
Separate England and Wales figures not available prior to 2000

Table 8: Abortions by gestation – Ireland 1975-2005

	Gestation (weeks)			
	Under 9	9-12	13-19	20+
1975	34.2	50.7	14.1	1.0
1980	31.3	51.3	15.7	1.7
1985	32.9	48.8	15.6	2.8
1990	37.8	41.6	18.0	2.6
1991	39.5	40.2	17.9	2.4
1993	40.8	41.0	16.5	1.7
1995	39.9	40.7	16.8	2.5
1997	35.1	45.6	17.1	2.2
1999	36.5	43.4	17.5	2.6
2000	40.0	43.1	14.6	2.3
2001	41.0	43.4	13.4	2.2
2003	41.2	42.8	13.9	2.1
2004	42.1	42.1	13.8	2.0
2005	48.5	37.0	12.6	1.9

Values are percentages; percentages are adjusted for missing data

Table 9: Abortions by gestation – Northern Ireland 1975-2005

	Gestation (weeks)			
	Under 9	9-12	13-19	20+
1975	24.8	56.0	18.0	1.1
1980	23.4	57.4	17.1	2.2
1985	31.6	51.3	15.6	1.5
1990	32.8	50.2	14.4	2.6
1991	34.7	47.5	15.6	2.1
1993	33.0	48.1	17.2	1.7
1995	33.7	48.1	16.8	1.5
1997	29.3	51.5	16.9	2.3
1999	32.5	48.5	17.4	1.6
2000	36.8	47.4	14.0	1.7
2001	39.3	46.6	12.2	2.0
2003	39.5	46.7	12.8	0.9
2004	41.3	44.6	12.7	1.4
2005	43.8	41.7	12.5	2.0

Values are percentages; percentages are adjusted for missing data

Table 10: Abortions by gestation – England 1985-2004

	Gestation (weeks)			
	Under 9	9-12	13-19	20+
1985	34.6	52.2	11.6	1.5
1990	36.3	51.6	10.8	1.3
1995	42.3	47.0	9.5	1.2
2000	43.2	45.1	10.3	1.5
2003	43.7	43.5	11.2	1.6
2004	46.5	41.2	10.7	1.6

Values are percentages; percentages are adjusted for missing data

Table 11: Abortions by gestation – Scotland 1980-2004

	Gestation (weeks)			
	Under 10	10-13	14-17	18+
1980	41.5	44.2	10.0	4.3
1985	46.5	41.4	9.3	2.8
1990	50.9	39.2	7.3	2.6
1995	63.1	30.3	4.9	1.7
2000	66.1	26.9	5.0	2.0
2003	64.8	27.0	5.7	2.5
2004	65.7	26.1	5.7	2.5

Values are percentages; percentages are adjusted for missing data

Table 12: Abortions by gestation – Wales 1985-2004

	Gestation (weeks)			
	Under 9	9-12	13-19	20+
1985	22.7	59.2	17.0	1.1
1990	23.9	61.5	13.3	1.4
1995	33.4	53.7	11.8	1.1
2000	44.9	43.5	10.5	1.2
2003	40.0	48.1	10.2	1.7
2004	39.4	47.6	11.3	1.7

Values are percentages; percentages are adjusted for missing data

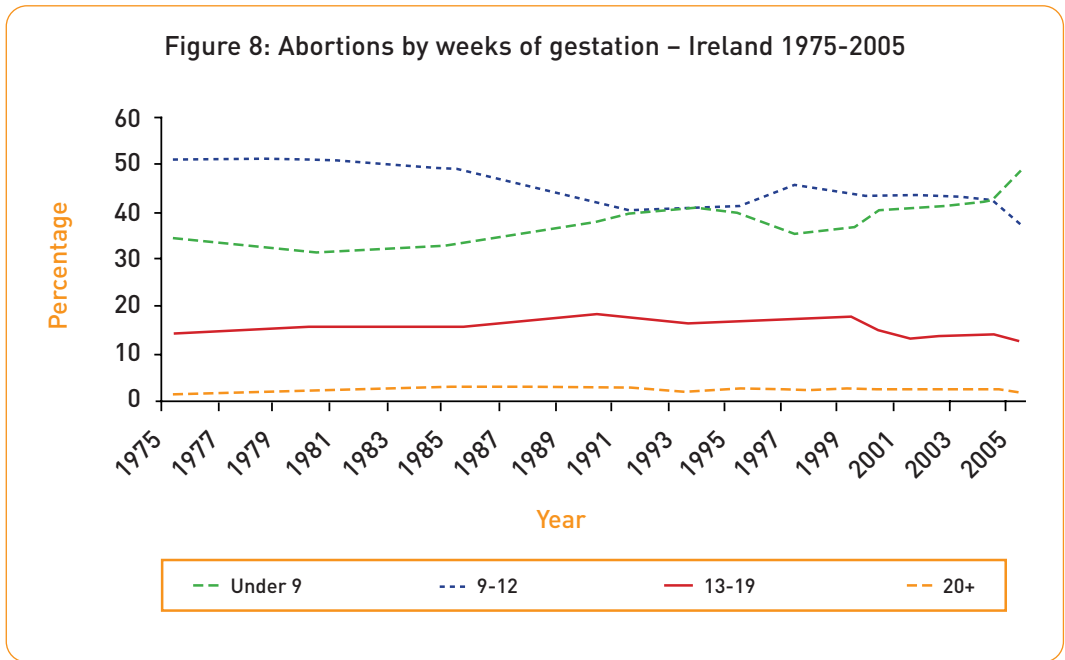


Figure 9: Abortions by weeks of gestation – Northern Ireland 1975-2005

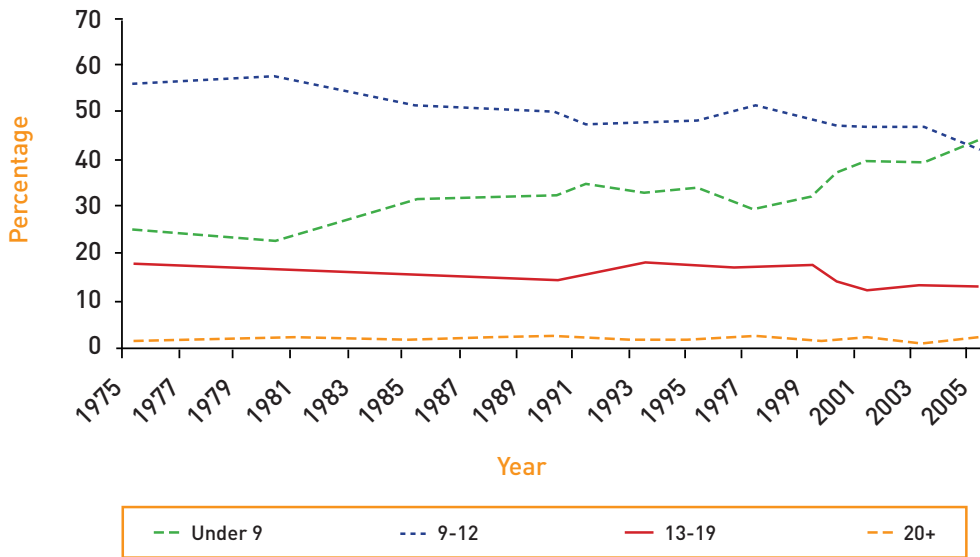
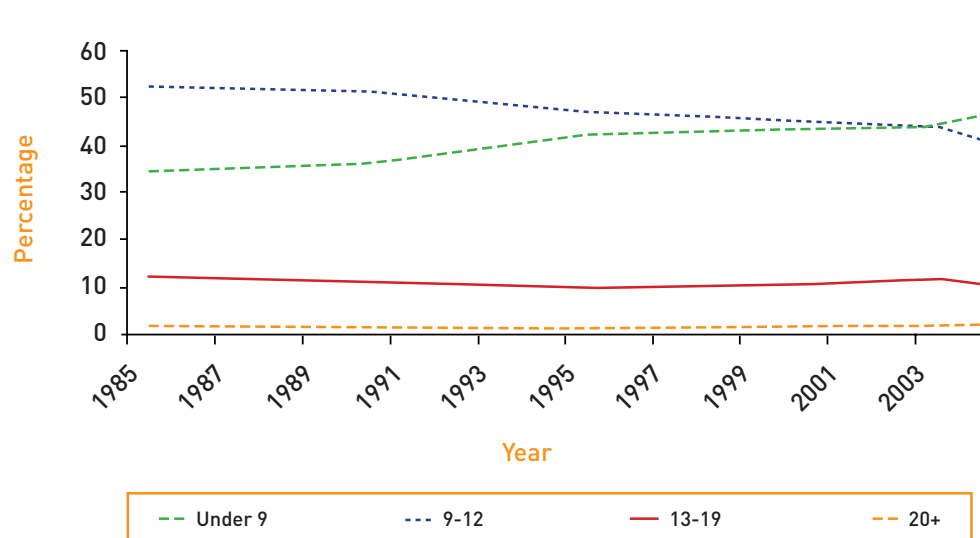
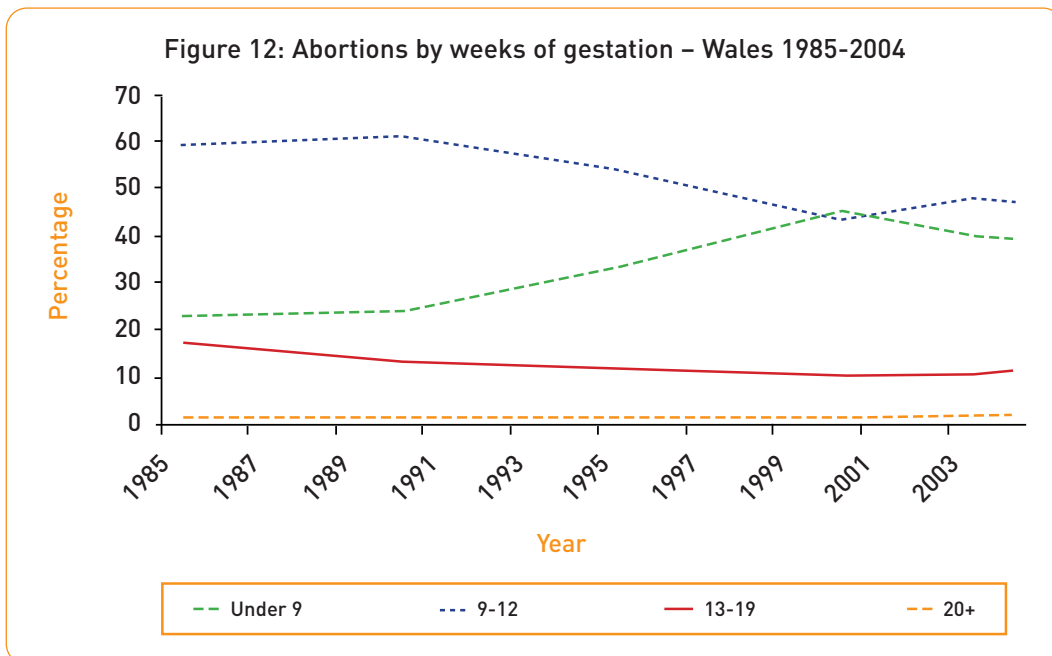
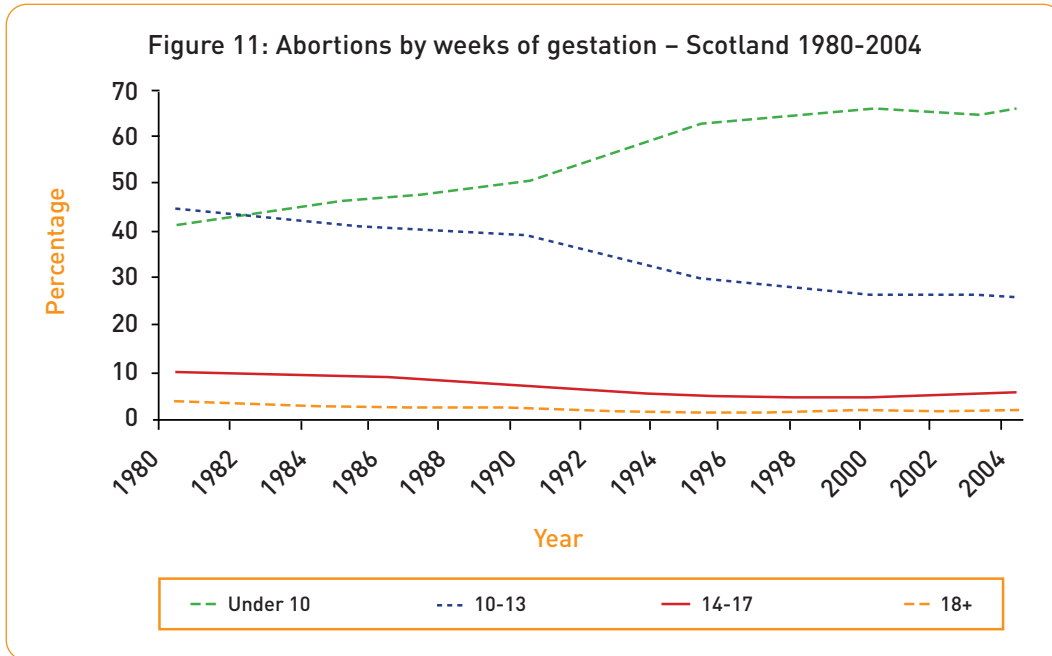


Figure 10: Abortions by weeks of gestation – England 1985-2004



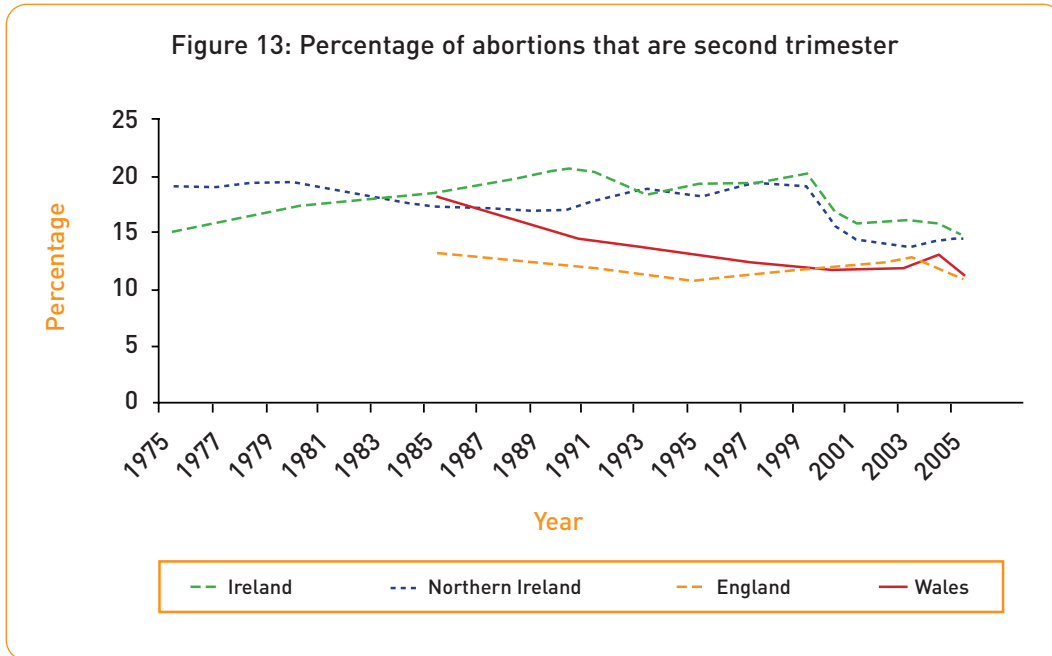


In Ireland, there has been a fall in the number of 9-12 week abortions; this appears to have translated into more under-nine-week abortions. 13-19 week abortions have been relatively static, with a decline recently - in particular from 17.5 per cent in 1999 to 14.6 per cent in 2000. Northern Ireland shows a similar fall in 9-12 week abortions relative to under-nine-week abortions. There was also a drop in 13-19 week abortions from 17.4 per cent in 1999 to 12.2 per cent in 2001, indicating improving access to earlier abortions.

England and Wales also show a big fall in the number of 9-12 week abortions relative to under-nine week abortions. This decline may partly be related to a performance indicator (and consequent financial incentives), introduced in 2002, for primary care organisations to increase the percentage of under-10-week abortions (HM Government 2005). A similar, but much stronger, pattern appears to have existed in Scotland (though the weeks of gestation are slightly different). Such trends towards the provision of earlier abortions may have influenced the decline in Irish under-nine-week abortions too. Second trimester abortions (those carried out between 13 and 24 weeks) appear to have declined in Scotland and Wales, and at a much earlier date than for Ireland and Northern Ireland. This is further illustrated in Table 13 (and Figure 13). This table shows that, currently, the percentages of abortions that are second trimester (13+ weeks) are highest in Ireland and Northern Ireland. Indeed, typically, the percentage of abortions that are second trimester has been higher for Irish women than Northern Irish women. The Centre for Sexual Health Research (CSHR) is conducting a separate study in a sample of English clinics on reasons for delay in obtaining late abortions. Women attending for later abortions (mostly 13+ weeks) were asked to complete a questionnaire on the day of their abortion. Findings from this study indicate that the main delay in obtaining an abortion for Irish (and UK) women was a delay in suspecting or confirming a pregnancy. Nineteen Irish respondents said that 'it took a while' to raise the money for the abortion procedure or for travel to the UK.

Table 13: Percentage of second-trimester abortions

	Ireland	Northern Ireland	England	Wales
1975	15.1	19.1	-	-
1980	17.3	19.2	-	-
1985	18.4	17.1	13.1	18.1
1990	20.6	17.0	12.1	14.6
1991	20.3	17.7	-	-
1993	18.2	18.9	-	-
1995	19.3	18.3	10.7	12.9
1997	19.3	19.2	-	-
1999	20.1	19.0	-	-
2000	16.9	15.7	11.8	11.6
2001	15.6	14.1	-	-
2003	16.0	13.7	12.8	11.9
2004	15.8	14.1	12.3	13.0
2005	14.4	14.5	11.0	11.0



Abortions by gestation and age are detailed solely for Ireland and Northern Ireland in Appendix A - Tables A1 to A28. For both jurisdictions, the percentage of second trimester abortions decreases by age and the percentage of under-nine-week abortions increases with age; that is, younger women are more likely to have later abortions.

3.5 Findings: Abortions by marital status

Most abortions to women from Ireland occur to single women (Table 14). The percentage of these women has increased slightly in recent years. In 1980s and early 1990s, around 75-80 per cent of abortions were to single women, whilst more recently it has been around 80-85 per cent. The number of unknown marital status cases, however, increased dramatically in 2003 when the Department of Health took over abortion statistics and introduced a new coding system for single women (*single with / without partner or single partner not known*). Previously all these women would have been simply registered as single. The more detailed coding system appears to have increased the number with unknown status, which may account for the slight decline in single women seen in Table 14.

Table 14: Marital status: Ireland 1975-2005

	Single	Married	Divorced/ Widowed/ Separated	Number not known (% of total abortions)
1975	81.7	13.2	5.1	*
1980	77.0	15.6	7.4	*
1985	77.0	16.7	6.3	42 (1%)
1990	77.4	15.7	6.9	76 (2%)
1991	77.7	14.7	7.6	45 (1%)
1993	78.2	14.5	7.3	43 (1%)
1995	80.9	13.0	6.1	98 (2%)
1997	82.7	11.5	5.8	177 (3%)
1999	84.5	10.7	4.8	260 (4%)
2000	85.1	10.9	4.1	333 (5%)
2001	85.0	11.1	3.9	394 (6%)
2003	82.3	13.5	4.2	2218 (33%)
2004	82.4	12.8	4.8	2188 (35%)
2005	80.9	13.5	5.5	1689 (30%)

Values are percentages of known marital status, excluding number not known

* Suppressed

For Northern Ireland, the percentage of women who are single is slightly lower, increasing from around 70-75 per cent in the 1980s to 75-80 per cent in recent years (Table 15).

Table 15: Marital status: Northern Ireland 1975-2005

	Single	Married	Divorced/ Widowed/ Separated	Number not known (% of total abortions)
1975	68.0	23.5	8.5	*
1980	68.4	18.8	12.7	*
1985	72.8	17.3	9.9	22 (1%)
1990	74.3	13.7	12.0	52 (3%)
1991	74.4	13.5	12.2	23 (1%)
1993	75.0	14.6	10.5	16 (1%)
1995	76.5	13.9	9.6	33 (2%)
1997	78.5	13.4	8.0	29 (2%)
1999	75.9	14.8	9.2	34 (2%)
2000	79.1	15.0	5.9	37 (2%)
2001	80.0	13.6	6.4	52 (3%)
2003	78.3	13.6	8.1	390 (30%)
2004	77.7	14.4	7.9	441 (35%)
2005	78.7	14.0	7.3	341 (29%)

Values are percentages of known marital status, excluding number not known

* Suppressed

For England, the percentage of women who are single has increased dramatically from 49.6 per cent in 1975 to 77.9 per cent in 2004 (see Table 16). This was initially compensated by fewer abortions to married women and more recently to fewer abortions to divorced / widowed / separated women. Scottish and Welsh data (Tables 17 and 18) follow a similar pattern to those of England. Thus, historically, proportionally more abortions in Great Britain were to married women than in Ireland. The increase in abortions to single women reflects changes to traditional family structures that have occurred over the past 30 years; i.e. although classified as 'single' these women may well be partnered, but not 'married'.

Table 16: Marital status: England 1975-2004

	Single	Married	Divorced/ Widowed/ Separated	Number not known (% of total abortions)
1975	49.6	40.4	10.1	94 (<1%)
1980	54.2	34.4	11.4	1217 (1%)
1985	62.7	26.9	10.4	1504 (1%)
1990	68.4	22.3	9.3	3424 (2%)
1995	-	-	-	-
2000	75.1	19.2	5.6	9980 (6%)
2003	76.3	18.9	4.7	37177 (21%)
2004	77.9	17.7	4.3	35871 (20%)

Values are percentages of known marital status, excluding number not known
Figures for 1995 not available

Table 17: Marital status: Scotland 1975-2004

	Single	Married	Other
1980	55.9	32.5	11.6
1985	63.8	24.5	11.7
1990	67.8	21.3	10.9
1995	69.2	19.8	11.0
2000	74.5	17.6	7.9
2003	76.5	14.0	9.5
2004	77.3	13.0	9.7

Values are percentages

'Other' includes divorced, widowed, separated and not known (as Scottish figures are provided in this format)

Includes abortions performed in England and abortions to non-residents in Scotland

Table 18: Marital status: Wales 1975-2004

	Single	Married	Divorced/ Widowed/ Separated	Number not known (% of total abortions)
1975	44.3	45.2	10.6	*
1980	47.1	39.5	13.4	28 (>1%)
1985	57.5	29.2	13.3	37 (>1%)
1990	63.3	24.3	12.4	35 (>1%)
1995	-	-	-	-
2000	77.0	17.3	5.7	310 (4%)
2003	80.8	15.7	3.5	2175 (29%)
2004	83.1	13.7	3.2	1056 (14%)

Values are percentages of known marital status, excluding number not known

Figures for 1995 not available

* Suppressed

Abortions by marital status and age, for Ireland and Northern Ireland, are shown in Appendix B Tables B1 to B6. They show that the vast majority of under 25s having an abortion are single women and always have been. The percentage having an abortion who are single and aged over 25 increased between 1975 and 2004, possibly due to increasing age at marriage and more cohabitation with partners instead of marriage. Conversely, the percentage having an abortion who were either married, separated, divorced or widowed decreased for these older age groups.

3.6 Findings: Abortions by purchaser

The 'purchaser' of an abortion is a term typically used to denote how abortions in Great Britain are funded. The purchasers of abortions in England and Wales were denoted between 1991 and 2002 as NHS (National Health Service), NHS agency (NHS abortions performed in an approved place under an agency agreement, such as a Marie Stopes clinic) or non-NHS (for example, privately funded abortions performed by Marie Stopes). From 2003, the data reflect a change in the abortion notification forms, which now ask whether the abortion was NHS or privately funded. NHS agency cases are thus those that are NHS-funded but are performed in a non-NHS establishment. Data on NHS agency abortions have only been published since 1985, as there were relatively few prior to that date; therefore, the statistics given in Tables 19-21, for England, Wales and Scotland are only compiled from then.

In Scotland, 78 of the 118 abortions in 1977-2004 (both jurisdictions combined) are performed in NHS establishments. No further figures are available. Correspondence with key informants tends to indicate that the number of NHS abortions in Scotland is due to the lack of non-NHS provision, some women slipping through the system or staff not applying NHS funding criteria due to the low numbers involved. Similar reasons are also likely to explain the small number of abortions performed in NHS establishments in England and Wales.

Table 19: Abortions by purchaser: England 1985-2004

Year	NHS	NHS Agency	Non-NHS	Abortions
1985	46	4	50	134,504
1990	42	6	53	166,460
1995	54	16	30	147,875
2000	45	28	27	168,023
2003	41	38	21	173,968
2004	40	42	18	177,691

Figures are percentages, except number of abortions

Table 20: Abortions by purchaser: Wales 1985-2004

Year	NHS	NHS Agency	Non-NHS	Abortions
1985	58	0.1	42	6,597
1990	60	0.1	40	7,440
1995	69	7	24	6,440
2000	56	29	14	7,519
2003	56	32	12	7,614
2004	57	30	12	7,724

Figures are percentages, except number of abortions

Table 21: Abortions by purchaser: Scotland 1985-2004

Year	NHS	Non-NHS	Abortions
1985	91	9	9,174
1990	91	9	10,198
1995	97	3	11,131
2000	96	4	11,979
2003	96	3	12,265
2004	97	3	12,406

Figures are percentages, except number of abortions; Includes abortions performed in England

All abortions performed in places other than NHS establishments in Scotland have been assumed to be non-NHS as opposed to NHS agency

Since 1990, for England and Wales (Tables 19 and 20), there has been a decrease in the percentage of non-NHS abortions. This has been counterbalanced by the same establishments performing abortions on behalf on the NHS, as NHS funding of abortions has increased over time. Overall, more abortions are performed by the NHS (57 per cent in 2004) or paid for by the NHS (87 per cent in 2004) in Wales than in England (40 and 82 per cent respectively). This is likely to be due to differences in local service policies and the limited non-NHS provision in Wales.

For abortions to Scottish residents (Table 21), most of those performed in Scotland are performed on the NHS, as there are no large independent providers in Scotland, whilst nearly all of those performed in England and Wales are non-NHS abortions.

3.7 Findings: Place of abortion

From correspondence with non-NHS independent abortion providers it is known that the vast majority of abortions to Irish and Northern Irish women are performed in Great Britain by the British Pregnancy Advisory Services (bpas) clinics, Marie Stopes International (MSI) clinics, the Calthorpe clinic in Birmingham and the South Manchester Private Clinic. Information provided by the Department of Health confirmed this.

	Ireland		Northern Ireland	
	Bpas	MSI	Bpas	MSI
1995	51	38	17	68
1997	45	45	18	71
1999	38	49	34	49
2000	31	57	46	36
2001	26	64	39	41
2003	23	62	37	44
2004	19	64	37	48
2005	17	66	31	47

Figures are percentages

Table 22 shows that Marie Stopes now perform around two-thirds of all Irish abortions and about half of all Northern Irish abortions. Over the last ten years the percentage of Irish abortions performed by Marie Stopes has increased, while the percentage performed by bpas has decreased (from 51% in 1995 to 17% in 2005). In 1995 MSI provided around 68 per cent of Northern Ireland abortions, but this number fell to 36 per cent by 2000, primarily due an increase in those performed by bpas (from 17% in 1995 to 46% in 2000). However, since this time more Northern Irish abortions are being performed by MSI: in 2005 MSI performed 47% of Northern Irish abortions and bpas performed 31%.

3.8 Summary of findings from historical analysis of abortion statistics

3.8.1 Access to abortion

Many women from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland travel to England and Wales (and sometimes to other countries) to obtain abortion services in private clinics, due to the legal restrictions on abortion in Ireland. In Ireland, abortion referral is illegal whilst, in the North, GPs may be unhelpful. In general, the number of Irish abortions performed in England and Wales has increased over time, but seemingly remained largely static for those from Northern Ireland, although the figures themselves may under report the actual numbers who travel for abortions, due to some women giving false addresses. A likely

decrease in those giving false addresses may have contributed to a rise in the Irish abortion rates. Furthermore, the number of women travelling to clinics in other European countries may be increasing.

3.8.2 Trends

- Abortion rates in Ireland are much lower than those in Great Britain. The historical data also show that reported abortion rates are higher for Ireland than Northern Ireland. This is possibly due to relative difference in the economic climate and fertility trends over the past 30 years. Abortions conducted within Northern Ireland and difference in population age structure account for only a small amount of the overall difference in rates between the two jurisdictions. Ireland has also seen a recent decline in abortion rates since 2001, though it is unclear why. The decline may be due to Irish women travelling to places other than the UK for an abortion – anecdotal evidence from sexual health service providers in Ireland suggests that this may be happening, although provisional data suggests that the number of women doing so is not significant. Contraception and sexual health information campaigns run by the Crisis Pregnancy Agency, which was established in 2001, may also have reduced the number of crisis pregnancies and thus the number of women seeking abortions.
- Age-specific abortion rates for women from Ireland are highest for those aged 20-24 and always have been; in England and Wales teenage rates were higher than 20-24 year old rates until recently. In 2004, under 17s in England and Wales were six to seven times more likely to have an abortion than their counterparts in Ireland.
- The percentage of abortions performed in the second trimester of gestation (13+ weeks) has fallen for Irish women, but it is still higher than that for Great Britain. This is possibly due to the time involved in Irish women researching and referring themselves to abortion clinics and making and carrying out travel arrangements. Other factors, such as the increased provision of early medical abortion to British women may account for the lower rate of second-trimester abortions in Britain. Overall, there has been an increase in early (under-nine-week) abortions across all nations. This is probably due to changing abortion priorities amongst health providers and the increased 'safety' of early medical abortion.
- Virtually all abortions to Irish women are provided privately in abortion clinics that are independent of the National Health Service. Marie Stopes International currently perform around two-thirds of abortions to Irish women.
- Most abortions to women from Ireland occur to single women.

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APPENDIX A: Abortions by age and gestation

These data were provided subject to a confidentiality agreement, where values between zero and nine must not be published (suppressed).

Table A1: Abortions by age and gestation – Ireland 1975					
Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	23.6	51.4	25.0	*	*
20-24	30.4	54.5	15.1	*	*
25-29	41.1	46.3	<i>12.6</i>	*	*
30-34	44.9	46.2	<i>8.8</i>	*	*
35+	43.6	46.2	9.4	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A2: Abortions by age and gestation – Ireland 1980					
Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	18.9	53.7	[27.4]	22.9	4.5
20-24	26.9	53.7	[19.3]	17.7	1.6
25-29	35.9	50.6	13.5	*	*
30-34	43.0	45.7	<i>11.3</i>	*	*
35+	44.8	46.0	9.2	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A3: Abortions by age and gestation – Ireland 1985					
Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	22.3	47.2	30.5	26.5	<i>4.0</i>
20-24	29.7	51.1	19.2	16.1	<i>3.1</i>
25-29	38.2	45.7	16.2	13.4	<i>2.8</i>
30-34	39.7	47.1	13.2	*	*
35+	39.8	49.9	10.2	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A4: Abortions by age and gestation – Ireland 1990					
Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	27.7	40.2	32.1	28.5	3.6
20-24	36.0	41.1	23.0	19.7	3.3
25-29	40.3	41.8	17.9	15.7	2.2
30-34	46.7	41.7	11.5	*	*
35+	43.0	44.2	12.8	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A5: Abortions by age and gestation – Ireland 1991					
Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	30.1	40.4	29.5	24.9	4.6
20-24	38.1	39.4	22.4	19.5	2.9
25-29	41.2	40.2	18.6	17.3	1.3
30-34	42.6	42.0	15.3	*	*
35+	48.9	40.2	11.0	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A6: Abortions by age and gestation – Ireland 1993					
Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	30.0	43.1	26.9	24.0	2.9
20-24	37.9	41.4	20.7	18.6	2.1
25-29	43.1	41.2	15.7	*	*
30-34	47.2	41.9	10.9	*	*
35+	51.4	36.6	12.0	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A7: Abortions by age and gestation – Ireland 1995

Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	30.7	42.4	27.0	23.1	3.9
20-24	36.5	43.2	20.3	17.6	2.7
25-29	41.3	41.0	17.7	15.3	2.4
30-34	49.7	34.2	16.1	*	*
35+	50.1	37.0	12.9	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A8: Abortions by age and gestation – Ireland 1997

Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	28.0	44.2	27.9	25.1	2.8
20-24	32.1	47.1	20.8	18.1	2.7
25-29	36.8	45.3	17.9	15.8	2.1
30-34	41.4	43.9	14.8	*	*
35+	44.2	44.9	10.9	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A9: Abortions by age and gestation – Ireland 1999

Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	27.2	42.0	30.9	25.5	5.4
20-24	31.7	45.1	23.2	20.6	2.6
25-29	40.4	44.2	15.4	13.7	1.7
30-34	46.5	39.5	14.0	*	*
35+	45.4	41.8	12.8	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A10: Abortions by age and gestation – Ireland 2000

Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	29.9	43.0	27.2	23.9	3.3
20-24	37.0	44.2	18.8	16.2	2.6
25-29	42.2	44.3	13.6	11.9	1.7
30-34	44.2	43.6	12.2	9.5	2.7
35+	50.9	37.2	11.9	10.5	1.4

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A11: Abortions by age and gestation – Ireland 2001

Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	33.1	45.4	21.5	18.4	3.1
20-24	38.0	43.6	18.5	15.8	2.7
25-29	45.6	42.4	11.9	10.0	1.9
30-34	41.8	45.8	12.3	*	*
35+	49.0	39.9	11.1	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A12: Abortions by age and gestation – Ireland 2003

Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	31.5	43.1	25.5	21.7	3.8
20-24	37.6	45.6	16.8	14.6	2.2
25-29	43.1	42.0	14.9	13.3	1.6
30-34	47.9	41.4	10.7	9.3	1.4
35+	48.2	38.8	13.1	11.2	1.9

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A13: Abortions by age and gestation – Ireland 2004

Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	31.1	44.0	24.9	21.8	<i>3.1</i>
20-24	38.2	43.0	18.8	15.9	2.9
25-29	44.6	42.6	12.7	11.6	<i>1.1</i>
30-34	48.2	40.5	11.4	10.3	<i>1.1</i>
35+	49.9	39.0	11.2	9.5	1.7

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A14: Abortions by age and gestation – Ireland 2005

Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	40.2	39.5	20.3	17.7	2.6
20-24	42.0	42.2	15.8	13.5	2.3
25-29	53.5	34.9	11.5	10.3	1.2
30-34	51.4	33.6	15.0	13.1	<i>1.9</i>
35+	57.6	31.1	11.4	9.9	1.5

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A15: Abortions by age and gestation – Northern Ireland 1975

Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	14.1	52.0	33.9	*	*
20-24	23.2	57.8	18.9	*	*
25-29	32.2	59.1	<i>8.8</i>	*	*
30-34	33.6	55.7	<i>10.7</i>	*	*
35+	32.4	56.6	<i>11.0</i>	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A16: Abortions by age and gestation – Northern Ireland 1980

Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	13.9	57.4	28.6	25.3	3.3
20-24	20.9	58.9	20.2	18.3	1.9
25-29	32.5	56.1	<i>11.3</i>	*	*
30-34	27.1	60.6	<i>12.2</i>	*	*
35+	36.5	51.3	<i>12.2</i>	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A17: Abortions by age and gestation – Northern Ireland 1985

Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	25.2	51.5	23.3	20.6	2.7
20-24	28.3	51.8	19.9	18.2	1.7
25-29	34.7	53.8	<i>11.5</i>	*	*
30-34	41.5	47.7	<i>10.8</i>	*	*
35+	42.5	48.9	<i>8.6</i>	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A18: Abortions by age and gestation – Northern Ireland 1990

Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	24.3	51.9	23.8	20.2	3.6
20-24	31.1	49.8	19.1	15.4	3.7
25-29	34.6	51.9	13.6	*	*
30-34	43.0	46.3	<i>10.8</i>	*	*
35+	42.7	48.9	<i>8.5</i>	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A19: Abortions by age and gestation – Northern Ireland 1991

Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	28.6	45.0	26.4	22.9	3.5
20-24	32.3	48.6	19.1	16.3	2.8
25-29	37.9	47.0	15.1	*	*
30-34	41.1	49.3	<i>9.6</i>	*	*
35+	41.3	48.4	<i>10.3</i>	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A20: Abortions by age and gestation – Northern Ireland 1993

Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	23.4	47.5	29.1	*	*
20-24	29.7	49.1	21.1	*	*
25-29	35.7	50.3	14.0	*	*
30-34	45.5	41.4	<i>13.1</i>	*	*
35+	39.3	<i>48.9</i>	<i>11.8</i>	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A21: Abortions by age and gestation – Northern Ireland 1995

Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	26.5	46.3	27.2	*	*
20-24	33.6	46.6	19.9	*	*
25-29	33.7	52.5	<i>13.7</i>	*	*
30-34	40.8	46.5	<i>12.6</i>	*	*
35+	36.9	48.3	<i>14.8</i>	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	20.9	48.1	31.0	25.6	5.4
20-24	25.7	52.7	21.6	19.4	2.2
25-29	33.0	54.4	12.6	*	*
30-34	33.2	50.0	16.9	*	*
35+	40.3	50.0	9.7	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	21.1	55.1	23.7	*	*
20-24	31.1	47.4	21.6	*	*
25-29	35.4	44.6	19.9	*	*
30-34	35.6	52.8	11.6	*	*
35+	42.9	43.4	13.7	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	26.2	52.2	21.6	*	*
20-24	36.1	45.6	18.3	*	*
25-29	38.4	50.4	11.2	*	*
30-34	42.4	43.5	14.1	*	*
35+	46.0	43.7	10.3	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A25: Abortions by age and gestation – Northern Ireland 2001

Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	30.1	47.3	22.6	*	*
20-24	34.6	50.3	15.1	*	*
25-29	43.8	46.8	9.3	*	*
30-34	46.2	45.4	<i>8.4</i>	*	*
35+	47.7	38.7	<i>13.6</i>	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A26: Abortions by age and gestation – Northern Ireland 2003

Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	29.1	52.6	<i>18.3</i>	*	*
20-24	37.4	46.9	15.7	*	*
25-29	45.2	40.3	<i>14.4</i>	*	*
30-34	35.6	56.4	<i>7.9</i>	*	*
35+	52.4	38.2	<i>9.5</i>	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Table A27: Abortions by age and gestation – Northern Ireland 2004

Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	35.1	44.9	<i>20.0</i>	*	*
20-24	36.4	48.5	15.1	*	*
25-29	46.7	39.7	<i>13.6</i>	*	*
30-34	45.0	42.0	<i>13.1</i>	*	*
35+	44.3	46.9	<i>8.8</i>	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

Age	Gestation (weeks)				
	Under 9	9-12	13+	13-19	20+
Under 20	30.1	47.1	<i>22.8</i>	*	*
20-24	42.2	42.8	15.0	*	*
25-29	48.2	38.0	<i>13.8</i>	*	*
30-34	52.8	37.8	<i>9.4</i>	*	*
35+	48.0	42.2	<i>9.8</i>	*	*

Values are percentages; values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

APPENDIX B: Abortions by age and marital status

These data were provided subject to a confidentiality agreement, where values between zero and nine must not be published (suppressed). Consequently, the number of under 20s who are single has sometimes been suppressed because the number of non-single women under 20 is less than 10 (the 20-24 year old single women have also to be suppressed to avoid this number being computed).

	Under 20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40+
1975	*	*	79.0	43.7	19.4	*
1980	98.0	93.0	76.9	41.1	21.4	15.7
1985	*	*	78.4	46.3	17.8	16.9
1990	*	*	79.0	44.5	25.9	10.3
1991	*	*	79.5	51.3	24.2	13.2
1993	*	*	82.1	47.7	24.6	16.4
1995	*	*	85.1	52.2	26.3	19.4
1997	*	*	88.6	56.9	32.3	17.4
1999	*	*	89.5	65.2	34.5	18.7
2000	*	*	91.7	65.7	39.8	25.8
2001	*	*	88.9	65.9	44.4	24.0
2003	97.9	96.8	87.5	69.6	42.4	27.5
2004	97.6	94.9	87.9	68.7	47.4	28.8
2005	96.8	94.4	87.0	68.1	46.2	30.7

Values are percentages of those with known marital status;
Values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

**Table B2: Percentage of women having abortions
who were married for each age group – Ireland 1975-2005**

	Under 20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40+
1975	*	*	<i>14.1</i>	40.5	59.7	<i>63.8</i>
1980	*	*	15.6	41.6	55.8	60.8
1985	*	*	13.4	38.9	62.7	67.6
1990	*	*	15.3	34.4	52.7	67.3
1991	*	*	12.7	30.0	50.8	62.4
1993	*	*	11.7	33.3	50.3	60.9
1995	*	*	9.7	30.4	48.5	66.1
1997	*	*	6.9	27.2	45.0	64.6
1999	*	*	7.9	22.9	46.9	52.2
2000	*	*	6.9	23.3	43.5	51.6
2001	*	*	8.8	24.4	39.7	56.3
2003	*	*	9.5	23.3	45.3	55.4
2004	*	*	8.7	24.8	38.9	54.2
2005	*	*	9.0	23.6	40.7	52.6

Values are percentages of those with known marital status;
Values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

**Table B3: Percentage of women having abortions who were divorced / widowed
or separated for each age group – Ireland 1975-2005**

	Under 20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40+
1975	*	*	<i>7.0</i>	<i>15.8</i>	<i>20.8</i>	*
1980	*	*	7.5	17.3	22.8	23.5
1985	*	*	8.1	14.8	19.5	15.5
1990	*	*	5.6	21.0	21.3	22.4
1991	*	*	7.8	18.8	24.9	24.3
1993	*	*	6.2	18.9	25.2	22.7
1995	*	*	5.2	17.4	25.3	14.5
1997	*	*	4.5	15.9	22.6	18.0
1999	*	*	2.6	11.9	18.6	29.2
2000	*	*	1.3	11.0	16.6	22.5
2001	*	*	2.2	9.6	15.9	19.6
2003	*	*	3.0	6.2	12.4	17.1
2004	*	*	3.4	6.6	13.7	17.0
2005	*	*	4.0	8.2	13.1	16.9

Values are percentages of those with known marital status;
Values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

**Table B4: Percentage of women having abortions
who were single for each age group – Northern Ireland 1975-2005**

	Under 20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35+
1975	*	89.1	49.7	33.3	*
1980	96.7	84.3	55.6	29.7	11.3
1985	*	91.0	59.7	27.7	*
1990	*	92.1	62.7	40.8	*
1991	*	92.5	64.6	44.0	*
1993	*	93.5	69.8	40.9	*
1995	*	*	72.2	48.3	27.9
1997	*	*	76.6	53.6	31.7
1999	*	*	79.3	51.2	21.4
2000	*	*	81.3	52.8	30.7
2001	*	*	83.7	57.0	33.0
2003	*	*	82.1	63.3	36.2
2004	*	*	83.1	67.5	42.1
2005	*	*	84.0	55.4	41.0

Values are percentages of those with known marital status;
Values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

**Table B5: Percentage of women having abortions
who were married for each age group – Northern Ireland 1975-2005**

	Under 20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35+
1975	*	6.4	37.6	46.7	*
1980	*	*	20.8	41.1	69.6
1985	*	5.5	23.0	41.6	*
1990	*	4.6	17.2	31.8	*
1991	*	5.1	16.6	25.6	*
1993	*	3.1	19.1	30.3	*
1995	*	*	15.2	28.3	45.9
1997	*	*	14.0	27.0	44.4
1999	*	*	11.8	30.0	49.2
2000	*	*	12.5	35.2	48.5
2001	*	*	11.4	27.2	46.8
2003	*	*	10.5	25.2	37.5
2004	*	*	9.6	21.2	41.5
2005	*	*	11.4	30.0	38.5

Values are percentages of those with known marital status;
Values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

**Table B6: Percentage of women having abortions who were divorced / widowed
or separated for each age group – Northern Ireland 1975-2005**

	Under 20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35+
1975	*	<i>4.5</i>	<i>12.8</i>	20.0	*
1980	*	*	23.6	<i>29.1</i>	<i>19.1</i>
1985	*	<i>3.4</i>	<i>17.3</i>	30.6	*
1990	*	<i>3.3</i>	20.1	27.5	*
1991	*	<i>2.4</i>	18.7	30.4	*
1993	*	<i>3.4</i>	<i>11.2</i>	28.7	*
1995	*	*	<i>12.6</i>	33.4	<i>26.2</i>
1997	*	*	<i>9.4</i>	<i>19.5</i>	<i>23.8</i>
1999	*	*	<i>8.9</i>	<i>18.9</i>	<i>29.4</i>
2000	*	*	<i>6.2</i>	<i>12.0</i>	<i>20.9</i>
2001	*	*	<i>4.9</i>	<i>15.8</i>	<i>20.2</i>
2003	*	*	<i>7.3</i>	<i>11.4</i>	<i>26.3</i>
2004	*	*	<i>7.2</i>	<i>11.2</i>	<i>16.5</i>
2005	*	*	*	<i>14.6</i>	<i>20.5</i>

Values are percentages of those with known marital status;
Values in italics refer to less than 50 abortions; *suppressed

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