



## Changes in Births by Month: United States, January 2019–June 2021

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### Abstract

**Objective**—This report presents provisional 2021 and final 2020 and 2019 data on changes in the number of U.S. births by race and Hispanic origin of mother, and by month of birth and state for January through June of 2020 and 2021.

**Methods**—Data are based on all birth certificates registered to U.S. residents in the 50 states and the District of Columbia (D.C.); data for 2021 are provisional and data for 2020 and 2019 are final. Changes in the number of births by month (from January through June) from 2020 to 2021 by race and Hispanic-origin group are compared with changes occurring from 2019 to 2020. Changes in the number of births for the first half of the year by race and Hispanic origin and by state are also compared for the periods 2020 to 2021 and 2019 to 2020.

**Results**—From 2020 to 2021, the number of births for the United States declined for January (9%), February (2%), and May (1%) and rose by less than 1% for March (nonsignificantly), April (1%), and June (3%). Although the decline in the number of births for the first half of 2021 (2%) was the same as the decline in births for the first half of 2020, it was largely the result of the 9% decline in births in January and was less than the decline for the second half of 2020 (5%). Births declined for all race and Hispanic-origin groups in the first half of 2021, with declines ranging from less than 1% (not significant) for non-Hispanic White women to 8% for

non-Hispanic Asian women. Births declined in 19 states and D.C. in the first half of 2021 and increased in 4 states.

**Keywords:** birth certificate • maternal race and Hispanic origin • state • National Vital Statistics System

### Introduction

In 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic continued into a second year, with a continuing impact on vital events. A recent report that analyzed trends in births in the United States based on provisional 2020 data revealed that the number of births declined for each month from 2019 to 2020, with larger declines observed for those months in the second half of 2020 (6%) compared with the first half of the year (2%) (1). Births declined for all race and Hispanic-origin groups in both the first and second halves of 2020, with larger declines in the second half of the year compared with the first half for all groups. In addition, the number of births declined for all states in the second half of 2020, compared with declines for only 20 states in the first half of 2020 and 9 states in the second half of 2019 compared with 2018.

This report describes changes occurring in the number of U.S. births overall and by race and Hispanic origin by month from January through June and for the first 6 months of 2021 compared with the same period for 2020, and changes in the number of births by state of residence for the first half of 2021 compared with 2020.

### Methods

Data for 2021 are based on 99.92% of all birth records received and processed by the National Center for Health Statistics as of September 21, 2021 (1–6). The provisional number of 2021 births are compared with final 2020 birth counts. Changes in final birth counts from 2019 to 2020 are also described.

Hispanic origin and race are reported separately on the birth certificate. Data shown by Hispanic origin include all people of Hispanic origin of any race. Data for non-Hispanic people are shown separately for each single-race group. Data by race are based on the revised standards issued by the Office of Management and Budget in 1997 (6). The race and Hispanic-origin groups shown are non-Hispanic single-race White, non-Hispanic single-race Black, non-Hispanic single-race American Indian or Alaska Native (AIAN), non-Hispanic single-race Asian, non-Hispanic single-race Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (NHOP), and Hispanic. For brevity, text references to race omit the term “single race” (7).

The number of births for February 2020 was adjusted to account for the additional day in February 2020 (February 29, leap day), compared with February 2021 and 2019. Both observed and adjusted numbers are shown for February 2020 in Table 1; text comparisons are based on the adjusted February 2020 number of births. The number of births for the total of the first 6 months of 2020 was not adjusted for

leap day due to the relatively small impact of the additional births for February 29.

Births by state by month are not analyzed because of the small number of births by month for some states.

The completeness of the provisional birth counts for nearly all states and months (including May and June) was 99% to 100%. The completeness level for Alaska was 100% for January through April 2021 but was 50% for May and 36% for June, for a total completeness level of 80% for the first 6 months of 2021 (3,4). Given the comparatively low level of completeness, data for Alaska are not shown separately but are included in the national totals due to the relatively small impact of Alaska data on the national estimates (Alaska comprised 0.3% of all 2020 births) (3–5,7).

All changes in the number of births and differences in the changes shown in this report are statistically significant at the 0.05 level based on a chi-squared test, unless noted otherwise.

## Results

### Changes in the number of births by month

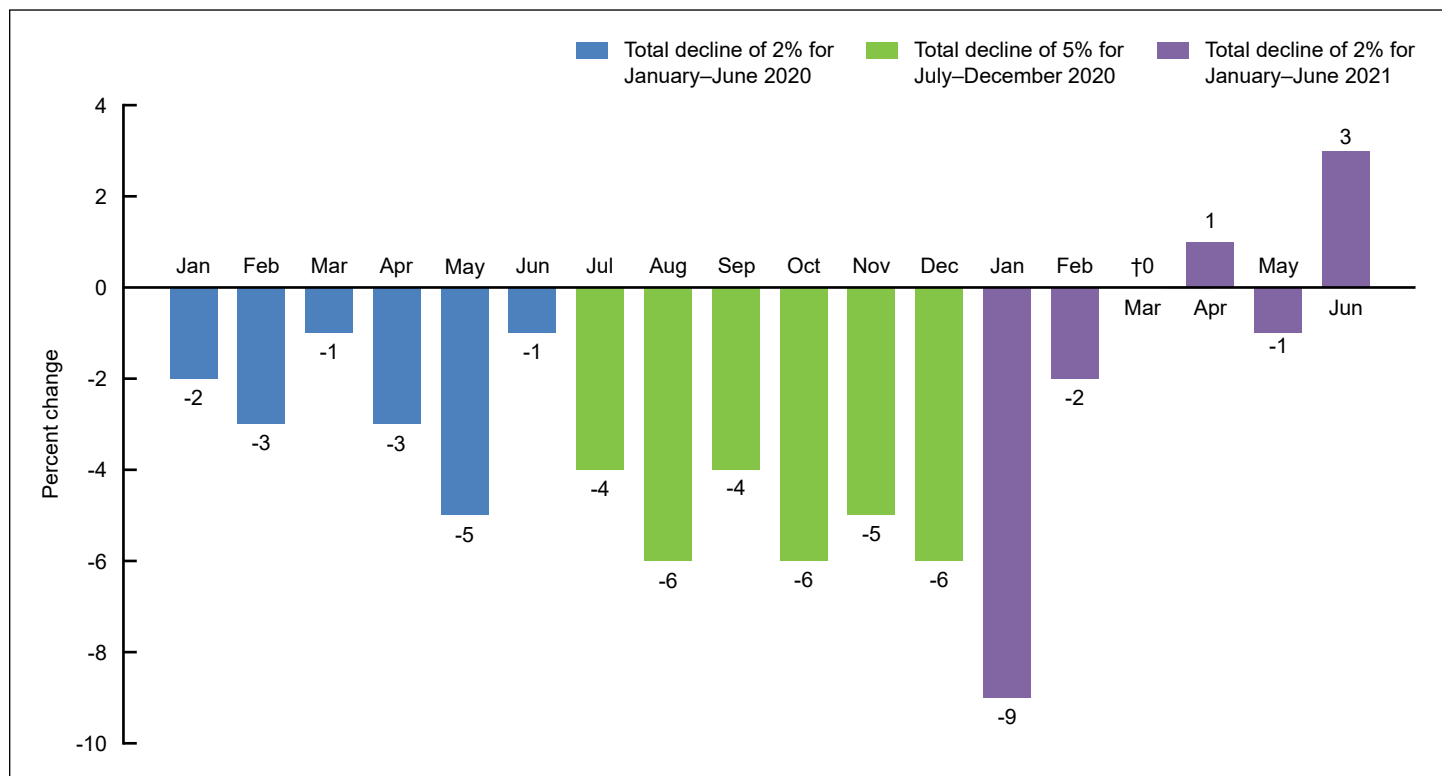
- During the first half of 2021, the number of births declined from 2020 levels in January (9%) and February (2%), but then rose slightly in March (nonsignificantly by less than 1%) and April (1%), declined again in May (1%), and then rose in June (3%) (Table 1, Figure 1). In contrast, from 2019 to 2020, the number of births declined for each month of the first half of the year, with declines ranging from 1% to 5% and the largest declines observed for February (adjusted), April, and May.
- The total decline in the number of births between 2020 and 2021 for the first half of the year (2%) was the same as the decline observed between the first half of 2019 and 2020, but less than the 5% decline in births based on final data for the second half of 2020

(7). The 2% decline in births for the first half of 2021 was largely driven by the 9% decline in births for January.

### Changes in the number of births by maternal race and Hispanic origin

- The largest declines in the number of births by month for the first 6 months of 2021 were observed in January for non-Hispanic White (7%), non-Hispanic Black (11%), Hispanic (11%), and non-Hispanic Asian (19%) women (Table 1). For non-Hispanic AIAN and non-Hispanic NHOPI women, the largest declines were observed in May (12%) and February (19%), respectively.
- The decline in births for the first half of 2021 compared with the same time period in 2020 was less than 1% (not significant) for non-Hispanic White women, 3% for Hispanic women, 5% for non-Hispanic Black and non-Hispanic NHOPI women, 6% for

Figure 1. Percent change in number of births, by month: United States, 2019 and 2020 final and 2021 provisional



† No significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ).

NOTE: Number of births for February 2020 was adjusted for leap day, February 29.  
SOURCE: National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System, Natality.

non-Hispanic AIAN women, and 8% for non-Hispanic Asian women (Table 1, Figure 2). In comparison, declines in the number of births for the first half of 2020 compared with the same period in 2019 were smaller for most groups, ranging from less than 1% (not significant) for Hispanic women to 6% for non-Hispanic AIAN women (same percentage difference as 2020 and 2021).

### Decline in number of births by state

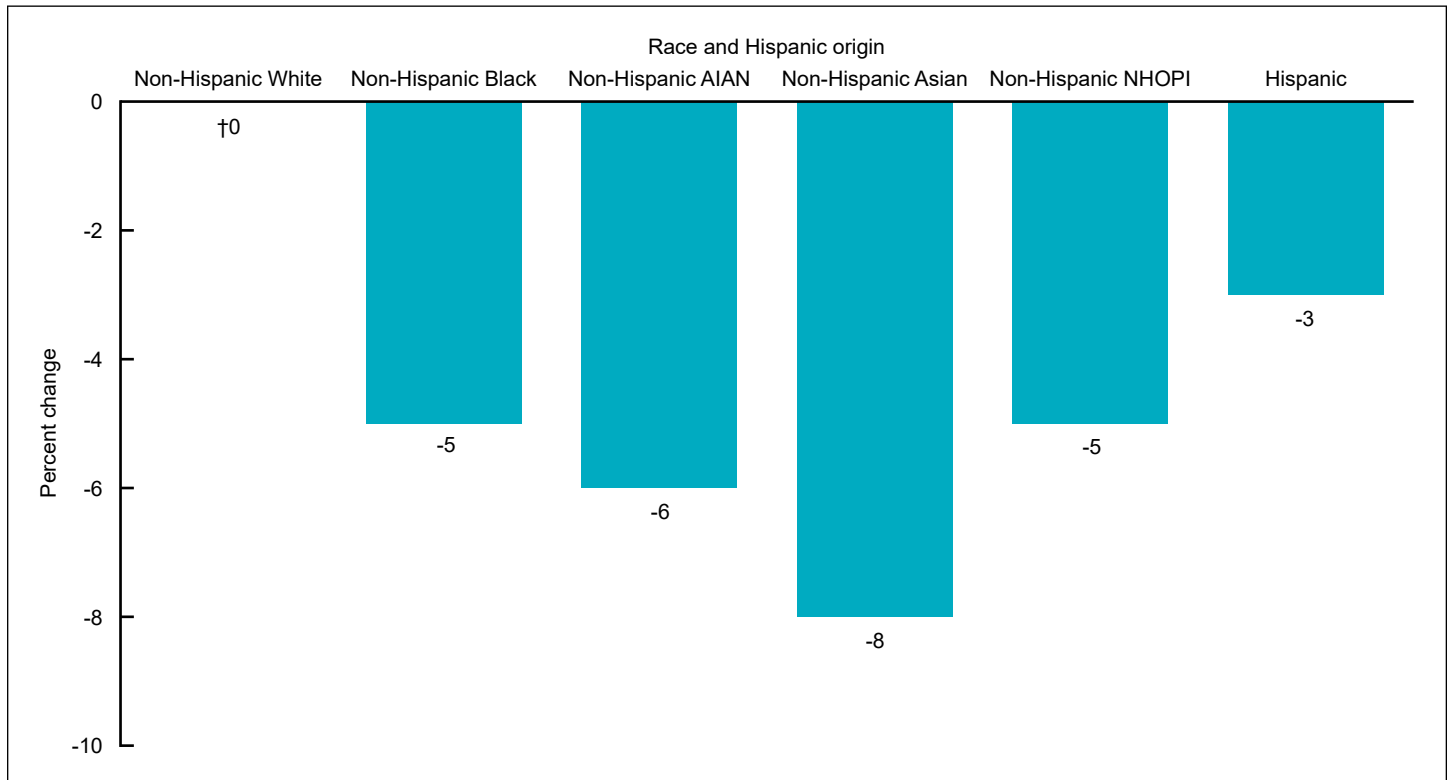
Nineteen states and the District of Columbia (D.C.) reported declines in the number of births in the first half of 2021 compared with the first half of 2020 (Table 2, Figure 3); declines in an additional 17 states were not significant. (Births by state by month are not analyzed because of the small number of births by month for some states.) The largest declines were seen in New Mexico (5%) and D.C. (9%).

- The number of births in the first half of 2021 increased in four states: Connecticut (3%), Idaho (3%), Tennessee (2%), and New Hampshire (5%) (Table 2); nine states reported increases that were not significant.
- In comparison, for the first half of 2020, the number of births declined for 20 states (23 additional states reported nonsignificant declines); 7 states reported nonsignificant increases in the first half of 2020.
- Births in 13 states declined for the first 6 months of both 2020 and 2021. Births declined in an additional 18 states in both years, but one or both declines for these states were not significant.
- One state (New Hampshire) reported increases in the number of births in the first 6 months of both 2020 and 2021 (the increase in 2020 was not significant).

### Summary

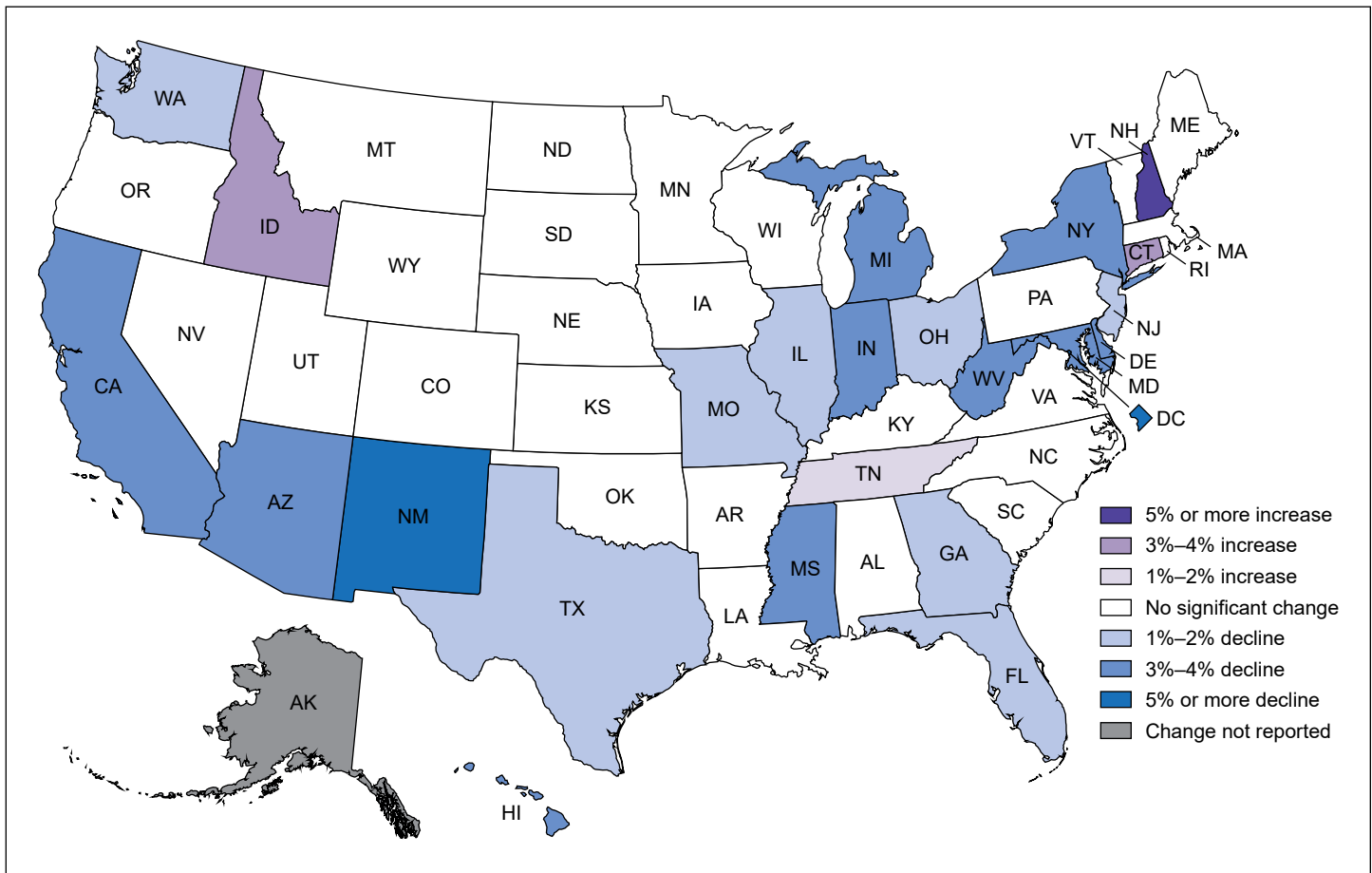
For the first 6 months of 2021, compared with the same period in 2020, the number of births declined for January (9%), February (adjusted) (2%), and May (1%), and rose in March (nonsignificantly), April (1%), and June (3%). Overall, the number of births for the first half of 2021 declined by 2% (due largely to the 9% decline in births for January), the same as the decline observed for the first half of 2020, but less than the decline observed for the second half of 2020 (5%) (7). Births declined in the first half of 2021 for all race and Hispanic-origin groups, with declines ranging from less than a nonsignificant 1% for non-Hispanic White women to 8% for non-Hispanic Asian women. In the first half of 2021, the number of births declined for 19 states and D.C. and increased in 4 states, compared with declines in 20 states and no increases in the first half of 2020.

Figure 2. Percent change in number of births, by race and Hispanic origin: United States, January–June 2020 final and 2021 provisional



† No significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ).  
 NOTES: AIAN is American Indian or Alaska Native. NHOPI is Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.  
 SOURCE: National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System, Natality.

Figure 3. Percent change in number of births, by state of residence: United States, January–June 2020 final and 2021 provisional



SOURCE: National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System, Natality.

From 2015 to 2019, births declined 2% annually for both the first half and second half of each year. Although the overall relative decline in births for the first half of 2021 was the same as that for the first half of each of the prior 5 years, the sharp decline in births in January and more moderate decline in February of 2021 followed by generally increasing trends beginning in March, are not consistent with those of recent years in which changes in births by month were more moderate. This difference between patterns seen for the first 6 months of 2021 and earlier years suggests that the magnitude of the downward trend seen in the second half of 2020 and January of 2021 may have begun to wane and declines in the number of births may be returning to prepandemic levels. However, ongoing evaluation of trends in births by month will continue to determine whether the changes observed

for the first half of 2021 will continue into the second half of the year.

## References

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## List of Detailed Tables

### Report tables

1. Births, by race and Hispanic origin of the mother and month of birth: United States, January–June, final 2019 and 2020, and provisional 2021, and percent change in births from 2019–2020 and 2020–2021 . . . 6
2. Births: United States and each state, January–June, final 2019 and 2020, and provisional 2021, and percent change in births from January–June 2019–2020 and 2020–2021 . . . . . 7

# Vital Statistics Surveillance Report

Table 1. Births, by race and Hispanic origin of the mother and month of birth: United States, January–June, final 2019 and 2020, and provisional 2021, and percent change in births from 2019–2020 and 2020–2021

Race and Hispanic origin of mother and year	January–June	January	February (observed)	February (adjusted) <sup>1</sup>	March	April	May	June
<b>All races and origins<sup>2</sup></b>					<b>Number</b>			
2021 <sup>3</sup>	1,748,768	276,980	266,107	266,107	302,137	292,454	299,308	311,782
2020	1,783,124	304,722	282,654	272,907	301,625	290,478	301,481	302,164
2019	1,814,497	310,872	279,963	279,963	304,237	298,947	316,386	304,092
<b>Non-Hispanic, single race<sup>4</sup></b>								
<b>White:</b>								
2021 <sup>3</sup>	914,813	142,083	138,803	138,803	159,055	153,980	156,969	163,923
2020	916,986	152,519	143,712	138,756	155,981	150,953	156,888	156,933
2019	937,741	156,819	142,992	142,992	157,502	156,516	165,587	158,325
<b>Black:</b>								
2021 <sup>3</sup>	245,753	41,310	38,628	38,628	41,952	39,810	40,936	43,117
2020	259,759	46,356	42,037	40,587	43,591	41,395	42,999	43,381
2019	262,114	47,486	41,497	41,497	43,583	42,151	44,584	42,813
<b>American Indian or Alaska Native:</b>								
2021 <sup>3</sup>	12,498	2,135	1,932	1,932	2,181	2,098	1,961	2,191
2020	13,234	2,292	2,048	1,977	2,213	2,195	2,240	2,246
2019	14,013	2,525	2,182	2,182	2,332	2,293	2,382	2,299
<b>Asian:</b>								
2021 <sup>3</sup>	102,279	15,658	15,410	15,410	18,019	17,482	17,552	18,158
2020	110,811	19,303	17,678	17,068	19,268	17,986	18,696	17,880
2019	116,289	19,628	17,975	17,975	19,910	19,261	20,168	19,347
<b>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander:</b>								
2021 <sup>3</sup>	4,413	799	616	616	753	731	806	708
2020	4,665	803	786	759	794	705	820	757
2019	4,695	790	762	762	814	738	847	744
<b>Hispanic<sup>5</sup></b>								
2021 <sup>3</sup>	409,941	65,687	61,961	61,961	70,060	68,202	70,722	73,309
2020	420,563	73,601	67,466	65,140	70,361	68,000	70,085	71,050
2019	421,991	73,742	65,667	65,667	70,442	68,517	72,747	70,876
<b>All races and origins<sup>2</sup></b>					<b>Percent change</b>			
2020–2021	-2	-9	-6	-2	†0	1	-1	3
2019–2020	-2	-2	1	-3	-1	-3	-5	-1
<b>Non-Hispanic, single race<sup>4</sup></b>								
<b>White:</b>								
2020–2021	†0	-7	-3	†0	2	2	†0	4
2019–2020	-2	-3	†1	-3	-1	-4	-5	-1
<b>Black:</b>								
2020–2021	-5	-11	-8	-5	-4	-4	-5	†-1
2019–2020	-1	-2	†1	-2	†0	-2	-4	†1
<b>American Indian or Alaska Native:</b>								
2020–2021	-6	-7	†-6	†-2	†-1	†-4	-12	†-2
2019–2020	-6	-9	-6	-9	†-5	†-4	-6	†-2
<b>Asian:</b>								
2020–2021	-8	-19	-13	-10	-6	-3	-6	†2
2019–2020	-5	†-2	†-2	-5	-3	-7	-7	-8
<b>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander:</b>								
2020–2021	-5	†0	-22	-19	†-5	†4	†-2	†-6
2019–2020	†-1	†2	†3	†0	†-2	†-4	†-3	†2
<b>Hispanic<sup>5</sup></b>								
2020–2021	-3	-11	-8	-5	†0	†0	†1	3
2019–2020	†0	†0	3	†-1	†0	†-1	-4	†0

† No significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ).

0 Quantity more than zero but less than 0.5.

<sup>1</sup>Number of births for February 2020 adjusted for leap day, February 29.

<sup>2</sup>Includes births to race and origin groups not shown separately, such as Hispanic, single-race White; Hispanic, single-race Black; and non-Hispanic, multiple-race women, and births with origin not stated.

<sup>3</sup>Provisional 2021 data; based on 99.92% of births.

<sup>4</sup>Race and Hispanic origin are reported separately on birth certificates; people of Hispanic origin may be of any race. In this table, non-Hispanic women are classified by race. Race categories are consistent with the 1997 Office of Management and Budget standards. Single race is defined as only one race reported on the birth certificate.

<sup>5</sup>Includes all people of Hispanic origin of any race.

SOURCE: National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System, Natality.

# Vital Statistics Surveillance Report

Table 2. Births: United States and each state, January–June, final 2019 and 2020, and provisional 2021, and percent change in births from January–June 2019–2020 and 2020–2021

Reporting area	January–June				
	2019	2020	2021 <sup>1</sup>	2019–2020	2020–2021
	Number			Percent change	
Total	1,814,497	1,783,124	1,748,768	-2	-2
Alabama	27,778	28,055	27,637	†1	†-1
Alaska	4,881	4,712	*	†-3	‡
Arizona	38,168	37,441	36,077	-2	-4
Arkansas	17,439	17,194	16,882	†-1	†-2
California	216,456	207,163	198,964	-4	-4
Colorado	30,590	30,524	30,977	†0	†1
Connecticut	16,752	16,617	17,110	†-1	3
Delaware	4,963	5,061	4,859	†2	-4
District of Columbia	4,364	4,470	4,088	†2	-9
Florida	105,184	102,493	100,977	-3	-1
Georgia	60,855	60,051	58,863	-1	-2
Hawaii	8,191	7,837	7,535	-4	-4
Idaho	10,896	10,645	10,984	†-2	3
Illinois	68,353	66,113	64,624	-3	-2
Indiana	38,992	38,864	37,877	†0	-3
Iowa	18,518	18,025	17,795	-3	†-1
Kansas	17,130	16,926	16,718	†-1	†-1
Kentucky	25,520	25,227	24,990	†-1	†-1
Louisiana	27,849	27,634	27,215	†-1	†-2
Maine	5,772	5,683	5,775	†-2	†2
Maryland	34,035	34,014	32,786	†0	-4
Massachusetts	33,601	33,366	33,396	†-1	†0
Michigan	53,014	52,286	50,769	-1	-3
Minnesota	32,474	31,800	31,355	-2	†-1
Mississippi	17,233	17,193	16,667	†0	-3
Missouri	35,046	34,234	33,595	-2	-2
Montana	5,546	5,499	5,543	†-1	†1
Nebraska	12,152	12,091	12,136	†-1	†0
Nevada	16,798	16,356	16,027	-3	†-2
New Hampshire	5,732	5,788	6,090	†1	5
New Jersey	48,245	48,583	47,455	†1	-2
New Mexico	11,048	10,756	10,223	-3	-5
New York	107,791	105,532	101,688	-2	-4
North Carolina	57,371	57,417	57,167	†0	†0
North Dakota	5,275	5,017	5,006	-5	†0
Ohio	65,303	63,879	62,900	-2	-2
Oklahoma	23,607	23,371	23,225	†-1	†-1
Oregon	20,937	19,999	19,801	-4	†-1
Pennsylvania	65,204	64,667	63,969	†-1	†-1
Rhode Island	4,993	5,064	4,987	†1	†-2
South Carolina	27,515	27,152	27,230	†-1	†0
South Dakota	5,686	5,520	5,641	†-3	†2
Tennessee	38,715	38,248	38,968	†-1	2
Texas	179,973	178,420	174,494	-1	-2
Utah	23,175	23,084	22,682	†0	†-2
Vermont	2,689	2,580	2,615	†-4	†1
Virginia	47,295	46,863	46,329	†-1	†-1
Washington	42,165	41,484	40,906	-2	-1
West Virginia	8,767	8,530	8,273	†-3	-3
Wisconsin	31,144	30,568	30,152	-2	†-1
Wyoming	3,317	3,028	3,062	-9	†1

† No significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ).

\* Estimate does not meet NCHS standards of reliability; data do not meet reporting standards of 85% or higher.

‡ Difference not calculable; data not reported.

0 Quantity more than zero but less than 0.5.

<sup>1</sup>Provisional 2021 data; based on 99.92% of births.

SOURCE: National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System, Natality.

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