

Pax Orbis Academy



Number of Abortions in Australia

The number of abortions committed in Australia is always an estimate, as official reporting is undertaken in only two states: South Australia and Western Australia. (Northern Territory is yet to report.)

Data from those two states is often extrapolated to provide an estimate for the whole nation. Other sources of data include Medicare records and PBS prescriptions, and most sources explain how they came to their conclusions.

Both pro-life and pro-abortion advocates have expressed a desire to see mandatory reporting undertaken by the states, so that a more precise picture of the abortion landscape can be painted. Below are some of the estimates in various categories: since there are discrepancies among professionals, statisticians and other agencies, results are given by year, along with the source. *Please note that a surgical abortion is routinely performed after a medical abortion which is incomplete. This means that the number of total abortions will be slightly inflated.*

Number of abortions in Australia

- 2005: 83,210 – prior to rollout of the abortion pill ¹
- 2014/15: 78,732 – total abortions ²
 - 75,512 = number of surgical abortions
 - 3220 = prescriptions of combination mifepristone/misoprostol for medical abortion
- 2017/18: 88,287 – total abortions ³
 - 67,546 = number of surgical abortions
 - 20,741 = prescriptions of combination mifepristone/misoprostol for medical abortion
- 2015-2019: 94,000 – Average annual no. of abortions among women aged 15–49 ⁴

Number of abortions in Victoria

- 65,451 = “abortion with operating room procedure” from Jan 2014 – Dec. 2016 ⁵
 - third most frequent surgical procedure in Victorian hospitals during that time
- 2019: 388 late term abortions (post 20 weeks) ⁶

Number of Abortions in South Australia

- 2023: 4905 total
 - 37 late term (post 22 weeks, 6 days) = 1% of all terminations
 - 2992 abortion pills (61%)
 - 1913 surgical (39%)

Number of Abortions in Western Australia

- 2023: 1642 (Medicare data only) ⁷
- 2022: 8545 total abortions ⁸
 - 76 late term (post 20 weeks)

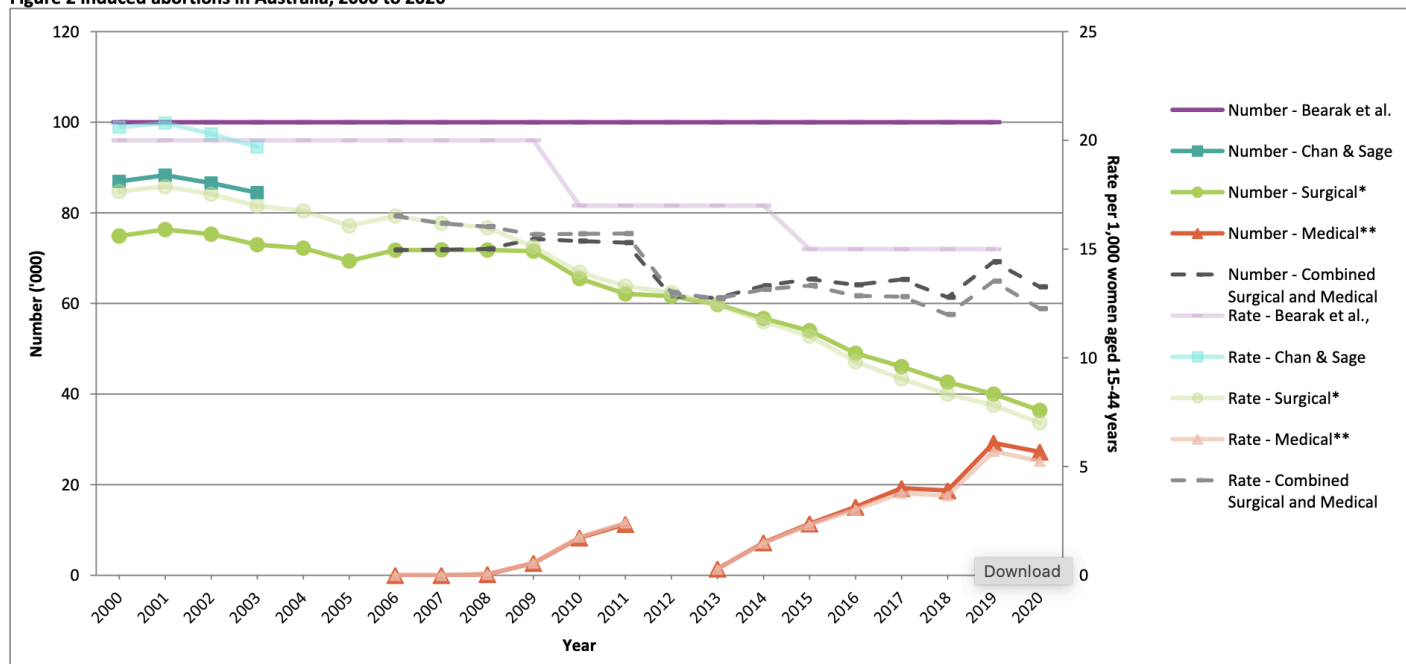
Abortion rate in Australia

- 15.4 per 1000 women aged 15–44 years, 2015/15 (surgical) ⁹
- 13.2 per 1000 women aged 15–44 years, 2017/18 (surgical) ¹⁰

Sources

1. [Children By Choice](#) ↵
2. [Medical Journal of Australia](#) ↵
3. [Medical Journal of Australia](#) ↵
4. [Guttmacher Data Center](#) ↵
5. [Medical Journal of Australia](#) ↵
6. [Family Planning NSW](#) ↵
7. [Johnston Archive](#) ↵
8. [Incomplete stats tabled in WA parliament](#) ↵
9. [Medical Journal of Australia](#) ↵
10. [Medical Journal of Australia](#) ↵

Figure 2 Induced abortions in Australia, 2000 to 2020



Note: *Item 35643 Evacuation of the contents of the gravid uterus by curettage or suction curettage.
 ** Combined mifepristone prescribing numbers derived from TGA (2012) *Australian Public Assessment Report for Misoprostol, Table 15.* <https://www.tga.gov.au/sites/default/files/auspar-misoprostol-121002.pdf> (2006-2011); PBS item 2710P (mifepristone; 2013-2016); PBS item 10211K (MS-2 Step; 2015-2020).

Sources: Bearak et al., (2020). Unintended pregnancy and abortion by income, region, and the legal status of abortion: Estimates from a comprehensive model for 1990-2019. *The Lancet Global Health*, 8, e1152-e1161. doi:10.1016/S2214-109X(20)30315-6
 Chan, A. & Sage, L. C., (2005). Estimating Australia's abortion rates 1983—2003. *Medical Journal of Australia*, 182, 447-452. doi: 10.5694/j.1326-5377.2005.tb06783.x
 Medicare Australia, http://medicarestatistics.humanservices.gov.au/statistics/mbs_item.jsp, accessed May 2021.
 Medicare Australia, http://medicarestatistics.humanservices.gov.au/statistics/pbs_item.jsp, accessed May 2021.
 Number of women aged 15-44 years as denominator was downloaded from Australian Bureau of Statistics website: <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/national-state-and-territory-population/latest-release>, accessed May 2021.