

Changing Abortion Trends in Estonia in 1992-2000

K. Haldre (1), H. Karro (1), A. Tellmann (2)

(1) Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Tartu University, Tartu, Estonia

(2) Institute of Experimental and Clinical Medicine, Tallinn, Estonia

Objective: The purpose of the study is to analyze trends in pregnancies and abortions in Estonia from 1992 until 2000 – years when major political, economic and health care changes took place in Estonia. Special reference is given to age group 15-19.

Methods: National data on abortions were obtained from the Estonian Medical Statistical Bureau and the Estonian Abortion Registry. Data about births were obtained from the Estonian Medical Birth Registry.

Results: The annual number of births decreased from 18 191 in 1992 (number of births per 1000 women in fertile age 48.2) to 12 204 in 1998 (number of births per 1000 women in fertile age 33.2). In 1999 and 2000 the fertility rate slightly increased. The proportion of teenage mothers has decreased from 14.6% in 1992 to 10.1% in 2000.

During the period of 1992-2000 the number of legally induced abortions has decreased from 25 803 to 12 745. Abortion rate has decreased from 69.1 in 1992 to 37.2 in 2000. Number of abortions per 1000 women in age group 15-19 was 55.5 in 1992 and 32.0 in 2000.

Proportion of repeated abortions has remained the same during the period, forming about 68% of all legally induced abortions.

Conclusions: Most probably improved services and availability and knowledge of family planning methods has impact on decreasing abortion rate.