

Fact Sheet

FACTS & FIGURES ON ABORTION

ABORTION LAW REFORM ASSOCIATION

NEW ZEALAND

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- Roughly **one quarter** of all pregnancies in New Zealand end in an abortion, and **one in every four** women has an abortion in her lifetime. (Silva et al. 2010)
- In 2010, **16,630 abortions** were performed in New Zealand, the lowest number since 2000 and the lowest rate of abortions since 1999, at 18.1. (The rate = abortions per 1,000 mean estimated women aged 15-44 years)
- **53 percent** of women who had an abortion were already mothers.
- **84 abortions** were performed on girls under the age of 15. That's **0.5 percent**. The age group with the highest rate of abortions is 20-24 year olds.
- **61.5 percent** of women who had abortions had never had one before; **26.6 percent** had already had one previous abortion; and **12 percent** had had two or more.
- In 2009, **98.2 percent** of all abortions were approved under the Crimes Act's Danger to Mental Health ground.
- **54 percent** of women who had abortions were using no contraception. (2009)
- **14 abortions** were carried out at 24 weeks gestation or over. That's **0.08 percent**. (2009)
- **56 percent** of abortions were performed at under 10 weeks gestation (2010), compared with 73 percent in the U.K. and 78.5 percent in the U.S. (Silva et al. 2011)
- Only **6 percent** of abortions were carried out using medication (the abortion pill) (2009)
- On average, women waited **25 days** from the time of first contact with a health provider to the time of pregnancy termination (Silva et al. 2010)
- **\$4.8 million** was paid to certifying consultants, two of whom must approve every abortion performed in New Zealand under grounds set out in the Crimes Act 1961.

Sources:

Abortion Supervisory Committee annual report 2010; Statistics New Zealand, 2011 abortion figures; "Improving termination of pregnancy services in New Zealand." By Martha Silva, Toni Ashton, Rob McNeill. NZMJ. 29 July 2011; "Ladies in Waiting: the timeliness of first trimester pregnancy." By Martha Silva, Toni Ashton, Rob McNeill. Reproductive Health. 23 July 2010.