

Italy

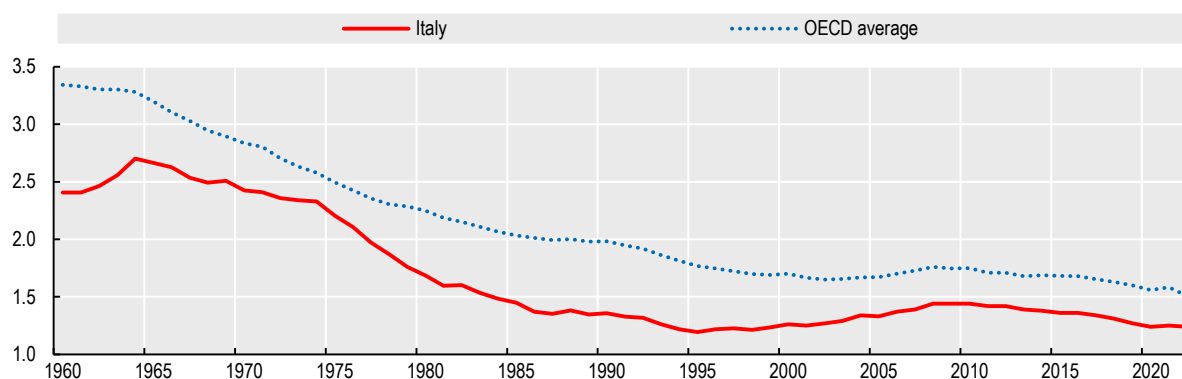
Spotlight on fertility trends

In 2022, 392 600 babies were born in Italy, corresponding to a total fertility rate (TFR) of 1.24 children per woman, which is below the OECD average of 1.51.

Across the OECD on average, the TFR steadily declined from 1960 until 2002. There was a small fertility rebound in the 2000s until 2008, upon which the TFR dropped to an all-time low of 1.5 in 2022. Fertility rates in Italy have been below the OECD-average since 1960. The TFR fell to 1.19 children per woman in 1995. There was a fertility rebound until 2008 (TFR = 1.44), but it has fallen since, and in 2022 was just above 1.2 children per woman.

Figure 1. In Italy total fertility rates have been below the OECD average over the past decades

Number of children per woman aged 15 to 49, Italy and OECD average, 1960 to 2022



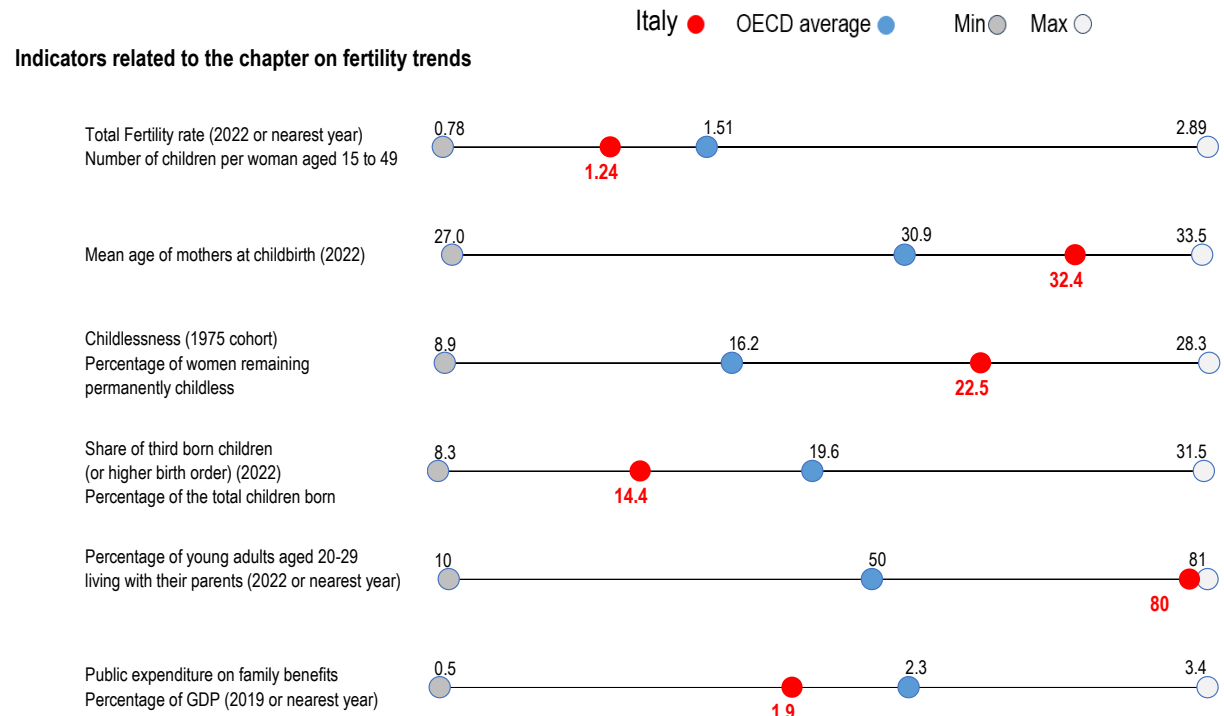
Source: Figure 1.1 in OECD (2024), *Society at a Glance 2024*, <https://stat.link/vxdlnl>.

Many factors affect fertility choices, including employment of both men and women, unemployment, financial support for families (e.g. paid parental leave and childcare supports) and housing costs (Figure 1.7, <https://stat.link/8zu7m3> and Figure 1.14, <https://stat.link/ois3k8>). However other factors such as (financial) uncertainty as well as norms and attitudes also play a role. In many OECD countries, the desire to establish oneself in labour and housing markets have contributed to a delay of childbearing. In Italy, the mean age of mothers at childbirth rose from 30.4 years in 2000 to 32.4 years in 2022, one and a half years above the OECD on average (Figure 1.5, <https://stat.link/163n2d>).

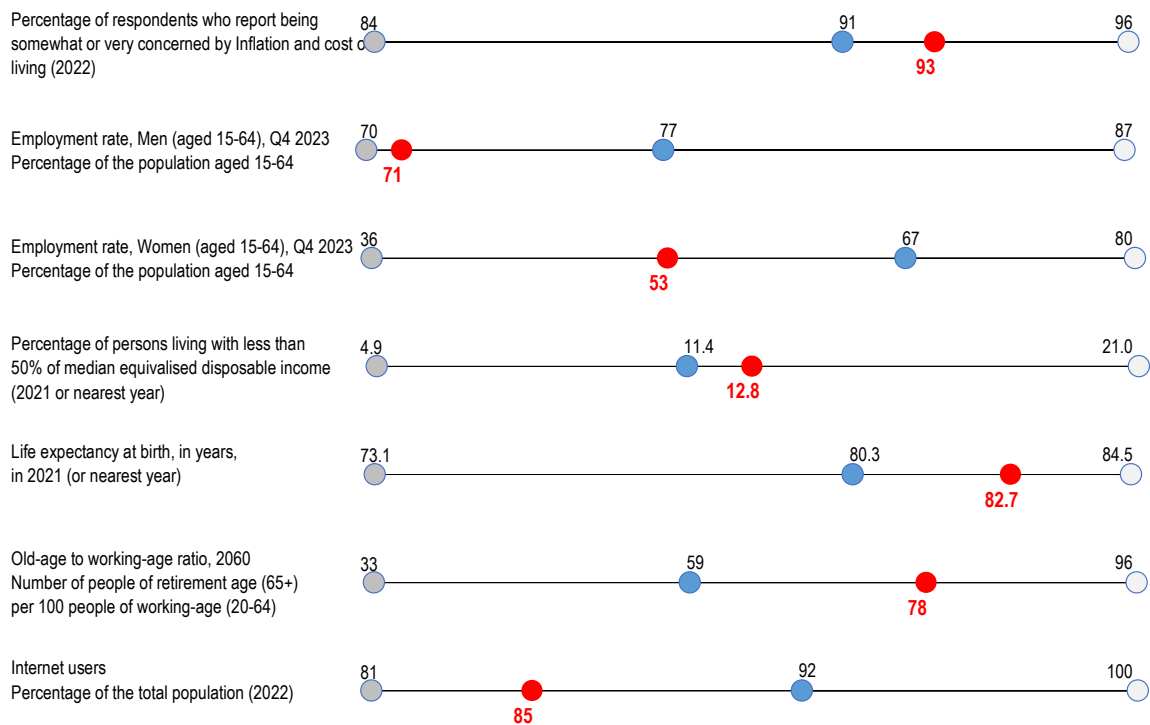
The fall in TFRs is related to women having fewer children and/or none at all. Childlessness has been on the rise across the OECD, but there is cross-national variation in timing and extent. In Italy, permanent childlessness doubled from 11% for women born in 1951 to 22% for women born in 1978 (Figure 1.3, <https://stat.link/mvkw3b>).

How does Italy compare?

Selection of indicators related to the chapter on fertility trends and other social indicators



Other social indicators



Source: OECD (2024), *Society at a Glance 2024*, <https://stat.link/vxdinc>.