

These Eight US States have Shrunk in 2016

New York, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, Wyoming, Connecticut, Vermont, Illinois, and West Virginia all experienced shrinking populations in 2015-2016 according to figures recently released by the United States Census Bureau. This was in part due to internal migration by people seeking new employment opportunities, warmer weather or retirement in other states.

Despite some states benefitting from migration and higher birth rates (Utah was the fastest growing state with a 2 percent gain), the overall growth rate of the United States population reached its lowest point since the Depression era. The annual growth rate of below 0.7 per cent was the lowest since 1936-37, despite immigration levels of around [one million annually](#) propping up 45 percent of that growth.

Demographers have historically considered that it is the economy that is putting couples off having children and that the birth rate should recover when the economy recovers. But birth rates have remained [stubbornly low](#) despite some economic pick-up in recent years, suggesting that more than just money is at play.

Factors such as infertility caused by the unprecedented delay in having one's first child and the pressure on mothers to manage both motherhood and sustain a career are also having an impact on sustained low birth rates in much of the Western world.

Moreover, many mothers in the U.S. receive little support to bring up their children themselves, little parenting assistance compared to other countries around the world, and are often unhappy with daycare available to them. Sixty percent of Americans say children are better off when a parent

stays home to focus on the family according to research by the Pew Research Center. For those mothers that work outside the home, the Family Medical Leave Act of 1993 requires US employers to provide only unpaid time off for childbirth. While some employers do offer paid parental leave, only [12% of American workers](#) are covered by those policies.

The overall U.S. population growth rate isn't expected to recover anytime soon. According to US census projections it will drop to 0.5 percent by 2040 due to the aging population, a lower birth rate and decreased immigration.

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