

After Years of Growth, Births Across DC Have Been Declining Since 2016

Ward 8 retains the highest number of births per year, but has seen the sharpest decline since 2016

The [population](#) in Washington, DC grew between 2000 and 2010 by approximately 30,000 residents and then by another almost 88,000 residents between 2010 and 2020. This was after many decades of decline. [Census estimates](#) indicate that the District’s population growth was greater in the earlier years of the 2010s and slowed in the later years of the decade, even before the pandemic.

Similarly, births in Washington, DC began increasing annually after 2003 with a few exceptions and peaked in 2016, reaching 9,854 births per year. Annual births began declining by 2-3% per year reaching 8,869 births in 2020, comparable to levels from 2007.

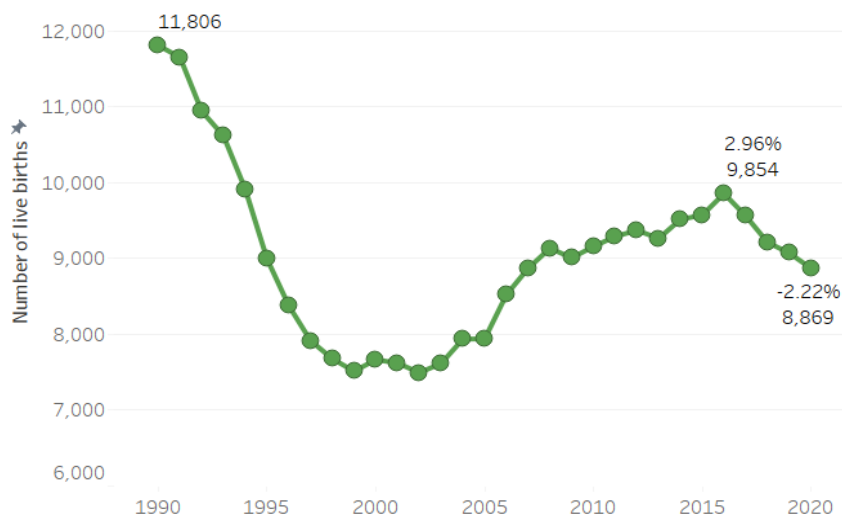
This decrease in births in Washington, DC now reflects a long-standing national trend of declining births since 2008, with an exception in 2014. Between 2010 and 2019, the national number of annual births declined an average of 0.96% a year, [according to the U.S. Census Bureau](#). The national decline, however, was much steeper in 2020: the average number of annual births was 4.06% lower than in 2019. Locally, the decline between 2019 and 2020 was 2.22%.

Births by Ward

While Washington, DC overall has experienced a decline in births in the last decade, the rate of change differed among wards. While most wards were on a downward

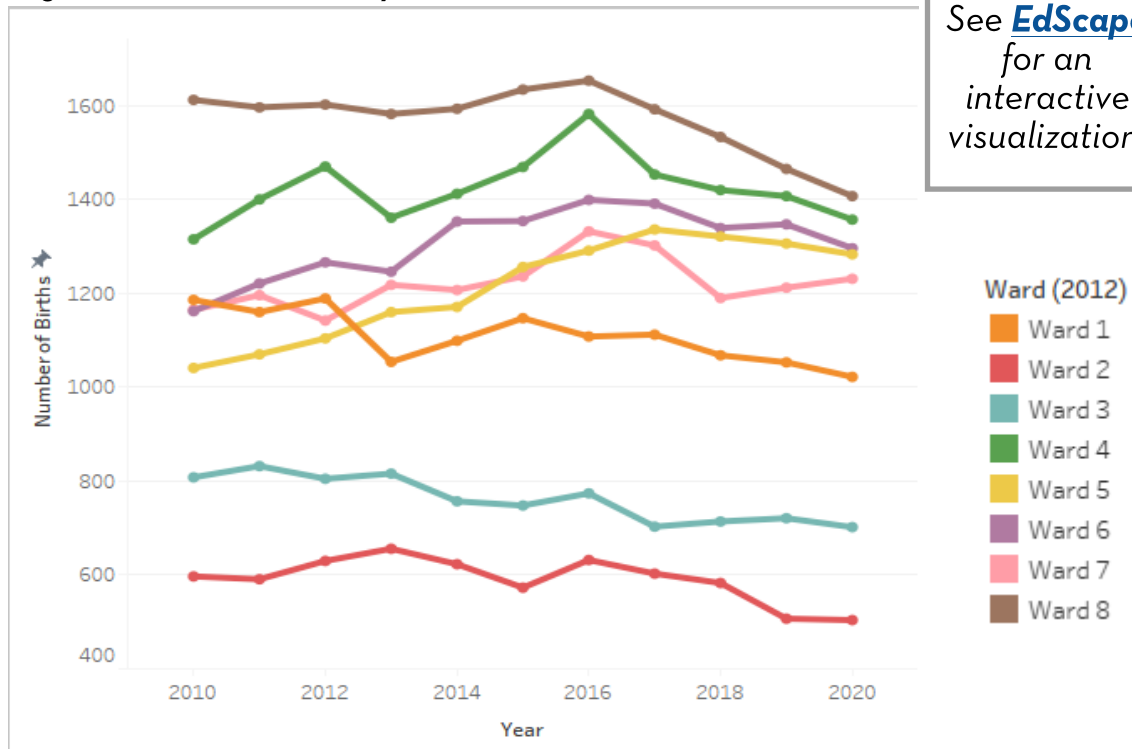
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Figure 1: Number of Births in Washington, DC



Sources: Natality Data, Vital Records Division, Center for Policy, Planning and Evaluation, DC Department of Health. Note: Excludes non DC resident births and includes DC resident births occurring in other states.

Figure 2: Number of Births by Ward



See [EdScape](#) for an interactive visualization!

Sources: Natality Data, Vital Records Division, Center for Policy, Planning and Evaluation, DC Department of Health. Note: Excludes non DC resident births and includes DC resident births occurring in other states. Wards represent the boundaries from 2012 and have not yet been updated to reflect 2022 boundaries.

trend by the end of the decade, the number of annual births in Ward 7 were increasing.

In **Ward 8**, the number of annual births hovered around 1,600 from 2010 until it reached its peak in 2016. Starting in 2016, the annual birth rate in Ward 8 began to decline rapidly. By 2020, the number of annual births in Ward 8 fell to 1,400.

The number of annual births in **Ward 4** similarly reached its high in 2016 and fell below 1,400 by the end of the decade. While this figure represents a decline in annual births, the number of annual births in Ward 4 was still higher by the end of the decade than it was at the start.

The number of annual births in **Ward 7** also reached its high in 2016, but unlike Wards 4 and 8, the number of annual births in Ward 7 began to increase in 2018.

Ward 5 saw a sharp increase in annual births from the start of the decade and reached over 1,300 annual births in 2017, before starting to slowly decline.

The number of annual births in **Ward 6** steadily increased after 2010, also reaching its peak in 2016, then started to slowly decline.

Due to the sharp increases in annual births in Wards 5 and 6, they represented a larger share of all births in Washington, DC by the end of the decade than they did at the start. However, the increases seen in these wards did not replace the gaps created by the declines in Wards 1, 2, 3, 4, and 8, resulting in fewer annual births by the end of the decade.

Please see [EdScape](#) for the latest updates.

Feedback: Email Edsight.DME@dc.gov