**Fiscal Facts: Wisconsin’s birth rate low compared to other states**

Compared to other states, Wisconsin’s birth rate is relatively low, ranking 38th of the 50 states and 5.6 percent below the national average of 12.2 births per 1,000 people. Wisconsin’s fertility rate, by contrast, is only slightly lower (0.7 percent) than the national average of 62. Among the states, Wisconsin’s fertility rate is near the median, ranking 28th. States with the highest birth and fertility rates are scattered throughout the West, while those with the lowest rates are clustered in New England.

The decline in the state birth rate mirrors a national trend; since 1989, the U.S. and Wisconsin birth rates have fallen by 25.5 percent and 22.3 percent, respectively. When it comes to fertility, however, the state has recently diverged from the rest of the country. Although Wisconsin’s fertility rate remains slightly below the national average, the gap has narrowed substantially in recent years. As recently as 2002, the national rate exceeded the Wisconsin rate by 6.3 babies per 1,000 women of child-bearing age. By 2016, however, the gap had narrowed to 0.4.

*This information is a service of the Wisconsin Policy Forum, the state’s leading resource for nonpartisan state and local government research and civic education.*