Working papers regional urban economics - Fertility in Colombia: Recent Trends and Socioeconomic Determinants.

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While motherhood is gradually shifting toward older ages, adolescent pregnancy persists in some regions of the country. Adolescent fertility must be understood as a phenomenon shaped by multiple dimensions, and its persistence constitutes a sensitive indicator of inequality.

Publication Date: Friday, 12 of December 2025 **Approach**
This study analyzes the evolution of fertility in Colombia between 1998 and 2024, with special attention to the social and economic factors that influence motherhood and, in particular, adolescent pregnancy. Using the universe of birth records from Vital Statistics and the 2018 National Population and Housing Census conducted by DANE, the analysis examines differences in fertility patterns according to the mother's and father's age, educational attainment, type of health insurance, marital status, and region. The study also incorporates information on poverty and labor informality, allowing for the identification of socioeconomic and regional inequalities that characterize early motherhood in the country.

Contribution
The document broadens the understanding of Colombia's demographic transition by offering an integrated view of the socioeconomic determinants of fertility. This approach strengthens the interpretation of fertility as a socially structured and regionally differentiated process, highlighting the inequalities that shape reproductive decisions and the opportunities available to women and households in different contexts across the country.

Results
Colombia is advancing in a demographic transition characterized by a sustained decline in the number of births and a shift of motherhood toward older ages. However, the persistence of adolescent pregnancy shows that this process has not been homogeneous across regions or social groups. Since 2020, the reduction in births has extended to all educational levels and areas of the country, although at different rates that reflect the structural gaps still present.

Factors such as poverty, labor informality, and low economic development continue to play a decisive role in the incidence of early motherhood. These findings suggest that adolescent pregnancy cannot be understood solely as an individual choice but rather as a manifestation of persistent social inequalities. In this regard, reducing its occurrence requires policies that transform the structural conditions sustaining it, expanding educational, employment, and reproductive health opportunities for young women.

Fuente: https://d1b4gd4m8561gs.cloudfront.net/en/publications-research/working-papers-regional-urban-economics/fertility-colombia-recent-trends