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**Recorded live births, 2022**

A total of 998 986 births were registered in South Africa in 2022. Registration of births within 30 days after the birth had occurred continue to improve. Limpopo province continues to be leading in registrations within 30 days with 88,5% births registered within 30 days of birth, whereas KwaZulu-Natal had the lowest proportion of births registered within 30days at 69,3%. This is according to the latest *Recorded Live Births*, 2022 statistical report released by Statistics South Africa.

Information on the number of live births is crucial for the measurement of changes in population size and composition as every country needs to know its characteristics at every administrative level, from national to the lowest geographic level. Unregistered children become invisible when important evidence-based public health policies as well as other social development initiatives are made.

Differentials by sex of the child at birth show that there were more male births compared to female births with a sex ratio of 102 male births per 100 female births registered. Most mothers in 2022 were those aged 20−34 years which accounted for 70% births that were registered in 2022. There were a total of 3598 births by mothers aged 10−14 years. Provincial differences show that on the overall, Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal had the highest number of birth occurrences and registrations compared to other provinces. The month of March, January and September had the highest number of birth occurrences implying conception in June and April and December.

In 2022, the most popular first names for males were Lethabo, followed by Lubanzi and then Melokuhle. For middle names, Junior was the most popular, followed by Blessing and Gift.

Amongst females, the top three most popular first names for 20122 were Onalerona followed by Melokuhle then Zanokuhle. It was the first time Onalerona appeared in the list of top 10 baby names. For middle names amongst girls, the most popular choices were Precious, Princess and Blessing, in that order. Melokuhle, Lethabo, Omphile and Lesedi were in the top ten list of names for both sexes. All the top ten first names for both sexes were of native languages except Junior for boys. Most of the popular baby names for males and females reflect positive hopes for the child, express beliefs and or are inspired by positive connotations of both love and acceptance.

The full reports are available on the Statistics South Africa website: [www.statssa.gov.za](http://www.statssa.gov.za)

**About the report**

Statistics South Africa publishes the *Recorded live births* statistical release on an annual basis. This publication presents statistics on the number of registered births for 2022 and also provides information on trends in births that occurred during the period 1999 to 2022 and also provides information on whether South Africans are registering their births within thirty days as stipulated by the Births and Deaths Registration Amendment Act. The release draws on data collected by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) through the civil registration system.

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