

MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND INVESTMENT
GENERAL STATISTICS OFFICE



VIET NAM POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS 2009

SEX RATIO AT BIRTH IN VIET NAM: NEW EVIDENCE ON PATTERNS, TRENDS AND DIFFERENTIALS



Ha Noi, May 2011

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PREFACE

The Viet Nam National Population and Housing Census 2009 (VNPHC2009) was conducted at the beginning of April 1st, 2009 under the Prime Minister's Decision No. 94/2008/QĐ-TTg dated 10th July, 2008. This was the fourth population census and the third housing census ever conducted in Viet Nam since 1975. The purpose of this census was to collect basic information on population and housing of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam for national development planning for the period of 2011-2020.

A recent important demographic phenomenon that has caught the attention of policy makers, researchers, and the public is the imbalance of the sex ratio at birth (SRB) that Viet Nam has been experiencing since the early 2000s. The sex ratio at birth, defined as the number of boys being born per one hundred girls, has experienced an increase in the past years, indicating an intentional intervention in the otherwise biologically stable equilibrium of the number of boys and girls born in a society. In order to have reliable data for monitoring and projection on the trends of this phenomenon in Viet Nam, the UNFPA has been providing technical support to the General Statistics Office (GSO) in collecting, analysing and disseminating data on the SRB from the annual population change surveys since 2006 and now also from the Viet Nam Population and Housing Census 2009.

The results of the 2009 census data analysis have shown that the SRB in Viet Nam has increased to a value of 110.6 boys per 100 girls in 2009, which is a significant deviation from the natural range of 104-106 boys per 100 girls.

The Government of Viet Nam is paying special attention to this emerging imbalance in the sex ratio at birth. It is recognised that pre-natal sex selection is a direct cause for the SRB imbalance. This is an illegal behaviour according to the regulations stipulated in the population ordinance issued in 2003 by the National Assembly Standing Committee and the Government decree No. 114 issued in October 2006. The gravity of this issue for Viet Nam was once more underlined in the National Strategy on Population and Reproductive Health for the period 2011-2020. Therefore, it is necessary to continue to analyse available data and continue research in order to monitor the SRB at national and sub-national levels in order to better inform interventions on policy and programmes.

This monograph titled ***“Sex Ratio at Birth in Viet Nam: New Evidence on Patterns, Trends and Differentials”*** uses the 15% sample data of the 2009 census and provides the most comprehensive and updated information to readers on the current trends of the SRB in Viet Nam. It also provides relevant information on the geographic and socio-economic characteristics of the SRB phenomenon in the country, and attempts to provide scenarios of possible future evolution of this indicator and the impact it may have on society.

The General Statistics Office of Viet Nam would like to express its special thanks to the United Nations Population Fund for their financial and technical support in the Viet Nam Population and Housing Census 2009, especially for data analysis and preparation of this monograph. We also would like to express our sincere thanks to Dr. Christophe Z Guilmoto for his great effort in analysing the data and developing this monograph. Our gratitude also goes to other national and international experts, UNFPA staff and GSO staff for their hard work and valuable inputs during the development of this monograph.

We are honoured to introduce a special publication with an in-depth look into a topic of interest among researchers, managers, policy makers as well as the whole society. We are looking forward to your inputs and comments on this monograph to improve the quality of the GSO's coming publications of detailed analyses of the Viet Nam Population and Housing Census 2009.

General Statistics Office of Viet Nam

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
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| GSO | General Statistics Office |
| TFR | Total Fertility Rate |
| SES | Socio-Economic Status |
| SRB | Sex Ratio at Birth |
| CSR | Child Sex Ratio |
| UNFPA | United Nations Population Fund |

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