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U.S. abortion rate hits 30 year low

WASHINGTON, Jan. 17 (Xinhua) -- The U.S. abortion rate has reached its lowest level in over three decades, according to a news report on Thursday.

According to the report, the actual number of abortions dropped to a new low, with 1.2 million abortions in 2005, compared to a high of 1.6 million abortions in 1990.

The abortion rate for 2005 was 19.4 abortions per 1,000 women aged 15 to 44.

In comparison, the rate was 29.3 abortions per 1,000 women in 1981, 21.3 abortions per 1,000 women in 2000, and 19.7 abortions per 1,000 women in 2004.

"We don't know why," said report author Rachel Jones, a researcher the Guttmacher Institute, a nonprofit group that focuses on reproductive issues.

The report does not include an analysis of why the levels have continued to decline. "We don't regard the findings as good or bad," Jones said. "It's a descriptive study."

However, Janice Crouse, director of The Beverly LaHaye Institute at Concerned Women for America, a conservative public policy organization, said one reason could be a decline in abortions among teen girls.

That drop, she added, is partially explained by the success of abstinence programs.

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