The proportion of all abortions that are to teenagers also has declined in the majority of countries. While in 1980 this proportion was 20% or higher in 10 of the 26 countries with data, this was so in only two countries in 1995. The proportion of all abortions to teenagers was still moderately high, with 21 countries in the range of 10–20%; this reflects the continuing prevalence of abortion among unmarried, sexually active adolescents in many developed countries.  

### Discussion

While information on adolescent childbearing is essentially complete and accurate, there are limitations in the availability and quality of abortion data. The lack of any reliable national information on abortion among adolescents in 13 of the 46 countries covered in the analysis is a great weakness, and restricts our ability to investigate pregnancy rates across the full range of developed countries. The fact that abortion data are incomplete in an additional 10 countries is also an important restriction. Although we dealt with this limitation by interpreting the data as minimum estimates, there is an unavoidable degree of uncertainty in making inferences about the likely level of and effect of underreporting on the relative standing of the countries involved.

The United States had one of the highest adolescent pregnancy rates in the mid-1990s, as it did in the early 1980s. A question often raised is whether the high level of adolescent pregnancy in the United States was due to the relative youth of American women. But this is not the case. Adolescent pregnancy rates are high in other countries with young populations as well.