

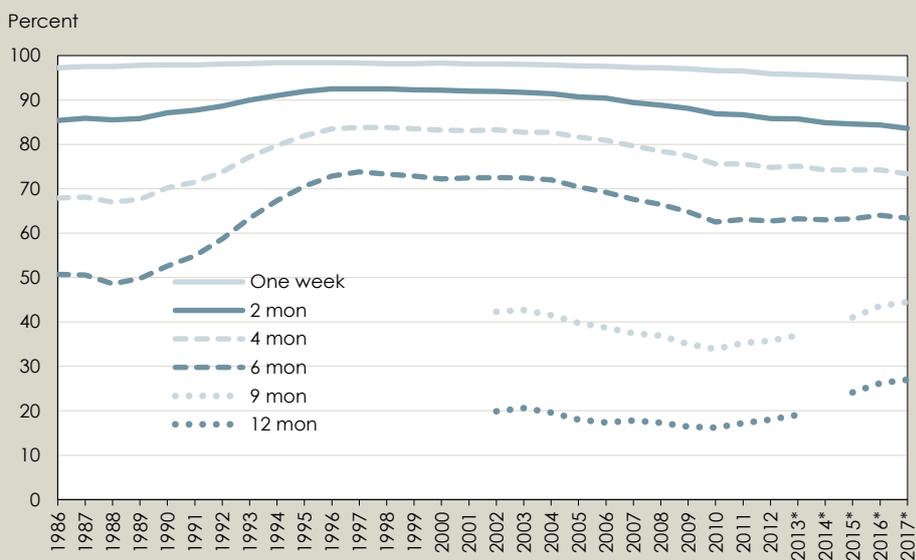
Statistics on breastfeeding 2017

Breastfeeding during the infants first months continues to decrease slightly, while breastfeeding among six-month-old infants has remained stable since 2010. However it becomes more common for infant’s to be breastfed at the age of nine respectively twelve months. The regional differences in the proportion of breastfeeding are greatest for infants at the age of six months or older.

The rate of breastfed children over time

During the last thirty years, the proportion of children that are breastfed in Sweden has varied. Through the 1980s and the first half of the 1990s the percentage of children that were breastfed increased and the breastfeeding rate in Sweden peaked during the period of 1995–2004. Among the children born in 2004, 83 percent of all children were breastfed at the age of four months and 72 percent were breastfed at the age of six months. Thereafter breastfeeding decreased for a few years. From the year 2010 and onwards about 75 percent of the children have been breastfed at the age of four months and about 63 percent at the age of six months. Breastfeeding at one week of age and at two months of age, on the other hand, has continued to decline somewhat even in recent years. In 2017, 95 percent of the children were breastfed at one week of age and 84 percent were breastfed at four months of age.

Figure 1. Exclusively or partially breastfed infants born 1986–2017



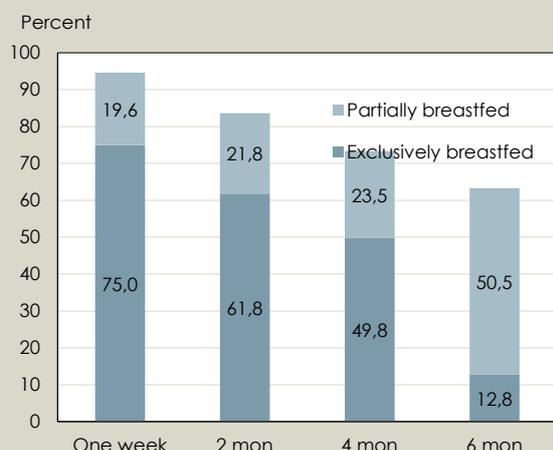
Estimated national values for 2013–2017 due to missing data for some counties. Data on breastfeeding at the age of 9 and 12 months started in 2002. No data is presented for 2014 due to poor quality.
Source: Statistics on breastfeeding. The National Board of Health and Welfare

Breastfeeding at nine and twelve months of age has increased slightly since 2010. Health visits to the child health services, according to the child healthcare program, usually take place at eight to ten months of age which means that the registration of breastfeeding at nine months can be uncertain. According to medical records, 44 percent of children born in 2017 were breastfed at nine months and 27 percent at twelve months. At that age, almost all breastfeeding children also receive a different diet.

Exclusive breastfeeding gradually declines

Of the children born in 2017, 95 percent of the infants received breast milk at the age of one week. Most children, 75 percent, are exclusively breastfed and the other 20 percent were given infant formula in addition to breastfeeding. At the age of six months, 13 percent of the children were exclusively breastfed and 50 percent were partially breastfed. Compared to children born in 2016, a slightly higher percentage of the children born in 2017 were partially breastfed and a lower percentage were exclusively breastfed during the first six months (figure 2.1 and figure 2.2). The decline in exclusive breastfeeding is the highest for infants between four and six months of age, at this time it is common for infants to start to get small samples of other types of food.

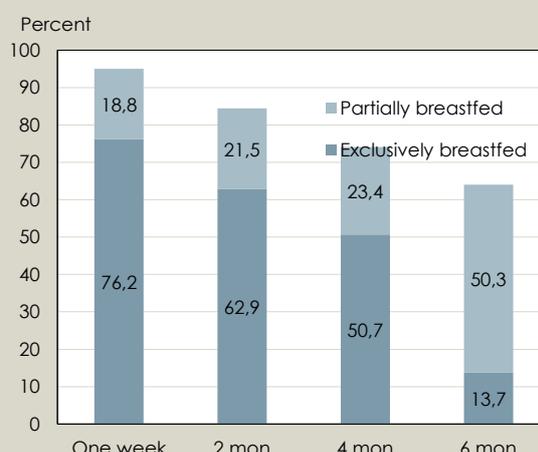
Figure 2.1 Proportion of breastfed infants born 2017



Estimated values due to missing data for the counties of Uppsala and Jämtland.

Source: Statistics on breastfeeding. The National Board of Health and Welfare

Figure 2.1 Proportion of breastfed infants born 2016



Estimated values due to missing data for the county of Uppsala.

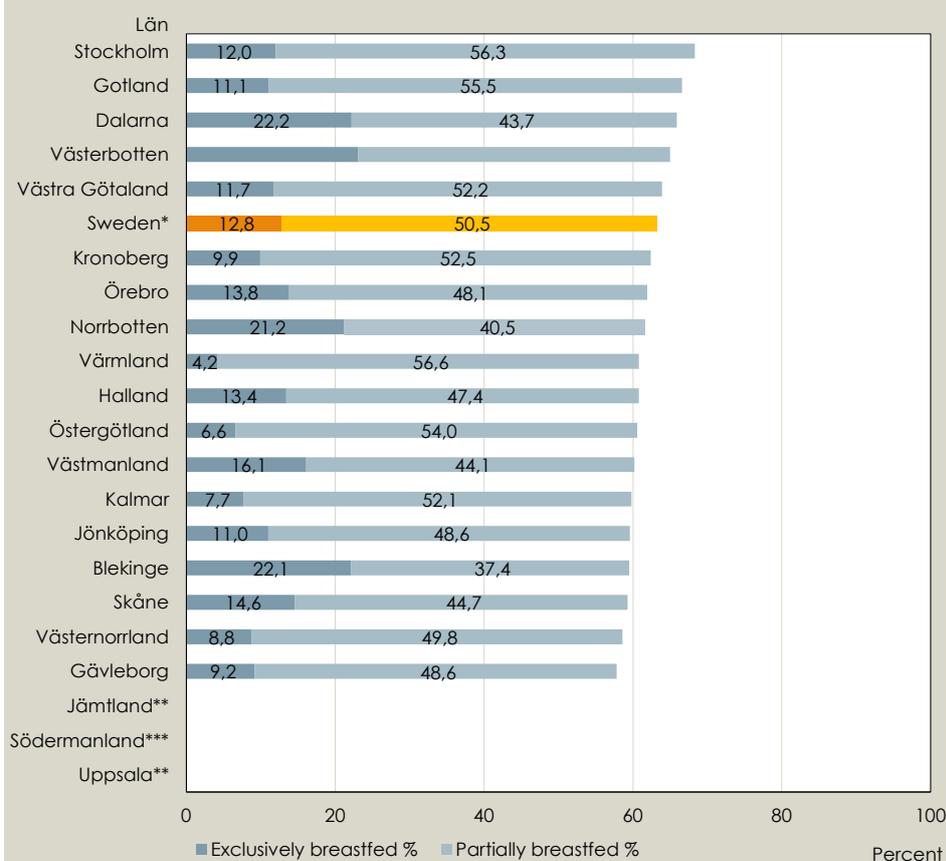
Source: Statistics on breastfeeding. The National Board of Health and Welfare

Regional differences

There are small differences between the counties regarding breastfeeding of the very youngest children. The percentage of children that are breastfed at the age of one week is highest in the counties of Dalarna, Gotland and Örebro, about 96

percent, and lowest in the county of Värmland, 92 percent. At six month of age, the differences between the counties are larger (figure 3). From the county of Stockholm where 68 percent of the infants were breastfed exclusively or partially to the county of Gävleborg where 58 percent of the infants were breastfed exclusively or partially. There is no data available for the year of 2017 for the counties of Uppsala and Jämtland, therefore they are not included in the comparison. The county of Södermanland has data loss above 30 percent and is not presented.

Figure 3. Proportion of children who were breastfed at 6 months, infants born 2017



* Estimated values
 ** Missing data for the counties of Uppsala and Jämtland
 *** Södermanland has a data loss over >30 % and is not presented
 Source: Statistics on breastfeeding. The National Board of Health and Welfare

Definitions

Exclusively breastfed refers to infants who have been fed only breastmilk and vitamins (e.g. vitamin D) or medicines

Partially breastfed refers infants who, apart from breastmilk, have also received infant formula, formula or other food.

Breastfeeding refers to both children who are exclusively breastfed and children who are partially breastfed.

New definition from the year 2004

The current definition has been in effect since 2004. Before 2004 children that were given samples of other food in addition to breast milk were included in the category *exclusively breastfed*. That means that statistics for years before 2004 is not completely comparable for *exclusively* and *partially* breast feeding.

More information

You can find more tables, diagrams and other information in the Excel file: www.socialstyrelsen.se/en/statistics-and-data/statistics/

If you want to use our statistical database (in Swedish):

https://sdb.socialstyrelsen.se/if_amn/

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