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Brazil: Sterilization Common Method Of Birth Control

by Erika Harding

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According to the Health Ministry, one of the main reasons for the nation's declining population growth rate is that an estimated 7.5 million women have been sterilized, largely because they were unable to afford more children, or lacked adequate information on alternative contraception methods. Census data indicate that Brazilian women are giving birth to an average of three children, compared to six during the 1970s. According to Lucia Sourto, member of the Rio de Janeiro state legislature, many employers demand proof of sterilization from married women before offering them a job. A recent study in Rio state indicated that 90% of women interested in contraception chose the birth control pill or sterilization. According to the Health Ministry, over 60% of all women between the ages of 15 and 45 regularly practice contraception. An estimated 4 million women have (illegal) abortions every year. (Source: Deutsche Press Agentur, 02/03/92)

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