

1 Table S4. Sensitivity analysis for low-quality studies on pooled incidence of preterm birth in China, 1990-2016.

Characteristic	Numbers of studies	Number of births	Preterm birth rate (%)		Heterogeneity	Multivariate meta-regression‡	
			Estimate	95%CI	I <sup>2</sup> (%)	Coefficient	95%CI
Administration region*							
Central	16	1414665	5.67	4.26-7.09	99.9%	Ref	Ref
East	36	1233688	6.11	5.54-6.68	99.5%	0.006	-0.003 to 0.015
North	35	594789	5.56	4.96-6.17	98.8%	-0.004	-0.014 to 0.006
Northwest	5	64905	6.80	4.29-9.31	99.4%	0.016	0.001 to 0.030
South	18	4701763	6.14	5.96-6.32	98.1%	0.014	0.004 to 0.024
Southwest	7	62098	7.09	4.49-9.68	99.3%	0.014	0.0003 to 0.028
Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan	13	1634881	6.51	5.83-7.19	99.2%	0.013	0.001 to 0.025
Multi-provinces	39	13909524	6.09	5.57-6.61	99.9%	0.012	0.003 to 0.021
Year							
1990-1994	9	417378	5.36	4.89-5.84	96.5%	Ref	Ref
1995-1999	19	1615512	4.64	4.27-5.00	99.1%	-0.011	-0.023 to 0.001
2000-2004	12	2754562	5.68	4.91-6.45	99.8%	-0.001	-0.014 to 0.012
2005-2009	37	4969552	6.74	6.25-7.24	99.8%	0.008	-0.003 to 0.020
2010-2014	81	12979754	6.13	5.80-6.47	99.8%	0.006	-0.005 to 0.017
2015-2016	12	880265	6.91	5.89-7.94	99.7%	0.016	0.003 to 0.030
Denominator†							
Live births only	105	17708337	6.01	5.70-6.33	99.9%	Ref	Ref
All births	15	661838	7.01	5.90-8.12	99.7%	0.003	-0.006 to 0.011
Unknown births	50	5246848	6.01	5.62-6.39	99.6%	0.003	-0.003 to 0.008
Method of estimating GA							
LMP	53	15878584	5.81	5.40-6.22	99.9%	Ref	Ref
Ultrasound	5	176565	5.47	3.96-6.99	99.4%	-0.003	-0.017 to 0.012
Ultrasound and LMP	38	5506970	6.51	5.97-7.06	99.8%	0.003	-0.004 to 0.010
Unknown	74	2054904	6.16	5.76-6.57	99.3%	0.004	-0.003 to 0.010

Singletons/multiples							
Singletons only	110	15617352	5.84	5.56-6.12	99.8%	Ref	Ref
Singletons and multiples	31	1604966	6.82	5.90-7.73	99.8%	0.015	0.008 to 0.022
Unknown	29	6394705	6.38	5.83-6.93	99.8%	0.006	-0.001 to 0.013

1 \*Only one study was from Northeast China, in which the preterm birth rate was 3.8% (95%CI: 2.4 - 5.21%). The meta-regression showed no significant difference  
 2 between Northeast and Central China.

3 †All births: livebirths and stillbirths. Unknown births: Does not specify live birth or all births.

4 ‡Adjusted variable: Quality level of studies.