

Statistical bulletin

# Child and infant mortality in England and Wales: 2024

Stillbirths, infant and childhood deaths occurring annually in England and Wales, and associated risk factors.

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# 1 . Overview

Child and infant mortality rates in England and Wales have fallen steeply since records began in the 1980s, though they have stabilised in recent years.

## Recent changes in infant and child mortality

- There were 2,318 infant deaths (aged under 1 year) and 918 child deaths (aged 1 to 15 years) in England and Wales.
- Compared with 2023 (2,320 infant deaths and 961 child deaths), the number of infant deaths in 2024 was similar, whereas child death decreased.
- Infant mortality rates remained stable between 2023 and 2024, at 3.9 infant deaths per 1,000 live births, while child mortality rates decreased from 9.0 to 8.6 child deaths per 100,000 population aged 1 to 15 years.

## Stillbirths and neonatal mortality

- There were 3.9 stillbirths per 1,000 live births and stillbirths.
- The neonatal mortality rate (aged under 28 days) was 3.0 deaths per 1,000 live births; the mortality rate was generally lower for neonates of longer gestations.
- Stillbirth and neonatal mortality rates were similar in 2023 and in 2024.

## Risk factors and cause of death

Infants with at least one of the following characteristics had higher rates of infant mortality:

- a birthweight under 2,500 grams
- Black ethnicity
- a mother aged under 20 years

In England, the mortality rate for infants living in the 10% most deprived areas was over twice the mortality rate for infants living in the 10% least deprived areas.

The most frequent cause of death among infants (aged 1 month to under 1 year) was congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities, whereas for children (aged 1 to 15 years) it was neoplasms (tumours).

# 2 . Child and Infant mortality

## Children (aged 1 to 15 years)

There were 918 child deaths, or 8.6 deaths per 100,000 children aged between 1 and 15 years, in England and Wales in 2024. This is down from 961 deaths in 2023. The child mortality rate also decreased from 9.0 child deaths per 100,000 population aged 1 to 15 years.

## Infants (aged under 1 year)

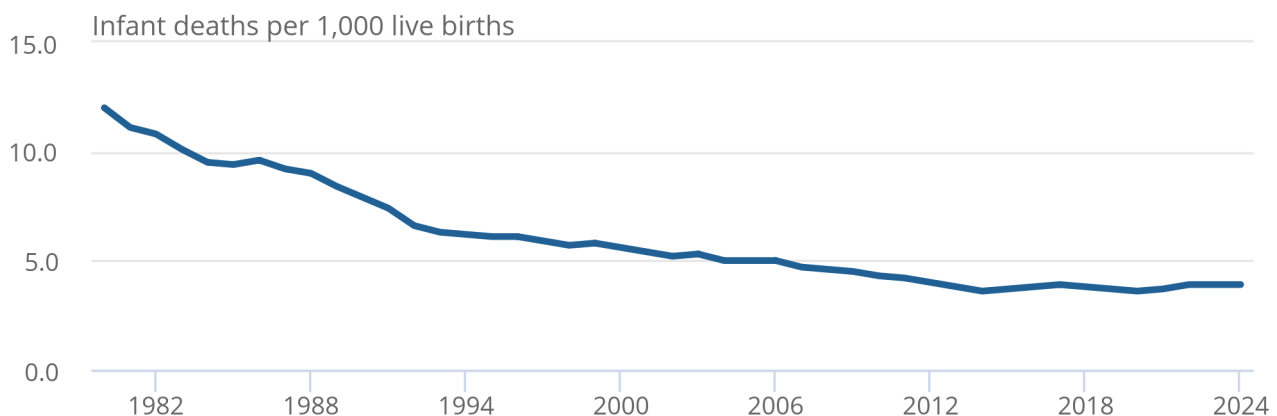
There were 2,318 infant deaths in England and Wales in 2024, equal to 3.9 deaths per 1,000 live births. This is similar to 2023, when there were 2,320 infant deaths. The rate also remained stable compared with 2023 (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: The infant mortality rate in England and Wales remains stable, following a sustained decrease since 1980**

Infant mortality rate, England and Wales, 1980 to 2024

Figure 1: The infant mortality rate in England and Wales remains stable, following a sustained decrease since 1980

Infant mortality rate, England and Wales, 1980 to 2024



Source: Child and infant mortality in England and Wales from the Office for National Statistics

## Causes of child and infant mortality

The leading causes of death for children in England and Wales in 2024 were:

- congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities (birth defects) for those aged 1 month to under 1 year; this accounted for 26% of deaths in this age group
- neoplasms (tumours) for those aged 1 to 15 years; this accounted for 27% of deaths in this age group

## 3 . Stillbirth and neonatal mortality

### Stillbirths

There were 3.9 stillbirths per 1,000 live births and stillbirths in England and Wales in 2024. This is similar to the rate in 2023 (4.0 per 1,000 live births and stillbirths).

## Neonates (aged under 28 days)

In 2024, 76% of infant deaths (1,758) in England and Wales were deaths of neonates aged under 28 days. After a record low of 2.5 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2014, the overall neonatal mortality rate was 3.0 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2024, the same as in 2023. Data for 2014 can be found in our [previously published tables](#).

## Government targets for stillbirths and neonatal deaths

In 2017, the government [set an ambition](#) to halve the 2010 neonatal mortality rate (for babies born at 24 weeks or later) and stillbirth rate by 2025 in England. The current targets are 1.5 neonatal deaths per 1,000 live births and 2.6 stillbirths per 1,000 births.

The neonatal mortality rate (1.4 neonatal deaths per 1,000 live births) and stillbirth rate (3.8 stillbirths per 1,000 births) in England in 2024 were both lower than in 2010. However, there has been little progress towards the ambition since 2020 (Figure 2).

### Figure 2: Stillbirth and neonatal mortality rates remain broadly stable

Stillbirths and neonatal mortality (babies born at 24 weeks or over) rates, England, 2010 to 2024

#### Notes:

1. Stillbirth data in this chart refer to stillborn babies born at 24 weeks and over.
2. Neonatal death data in this chart refer to babies who were born alive at 24 weeks and over, and died within 28 days of birth.

## 4 . Risk factors for neonatal and infant mortality

### Gestational age

The mortality rate for neonates born before 24 weeks gestation was 789.6 deaths per 1,000 live births in England and Wales in 2024. Though this only represents about 0.1% of all live births, these babies accounted for 39.7% of all neonatal deaths in 2024 (Figure 3).

In comparison, the neonatal mortality rate for babies born at 37 and over weeks gestation (92.0% of all live births) was 0.5 deaths per 1,000 live births.

### Figure 3: Neonatal mortality is highest at the lowest gestational ages

Change over time in neonatal mortality rates since 2010 by gestational ages, England and Wales, 2010 to 2024

#### Notes:

1. Neonatal deaths include babies who were born alive and died within 28 days of birth.

The improvement in overall neonatal mortality rate since 2010 in England and Wales has not been consistent. It has decreased by over a third for babies born at 37 weeks or over gestation, but only by 5.7% for babies born before 24 weeks gestation.

## Birthweight

Birthweight is closely associated with infant mortality. The mortality rate for infants with low birthweight (weighing under 2.5 kilograms) was 28.7 deaths per 1,000 live births in England and Wales in 2024. Infants weighing 2.5 kilograms or more had a much lower mortality rate, at 0.8 deaths per 1,000 live births.

## Geography

In England, the West Midlands region continued to have the highest infant mortality rate (6.0 deaths per 1,000 live births). The South West region continued to have the lowest (2.8 deaths per 1,000 live births).

There were 94 infant deaths (3.5 deaths per 1,000 live births) in Wales in 2024.

## Deprivation

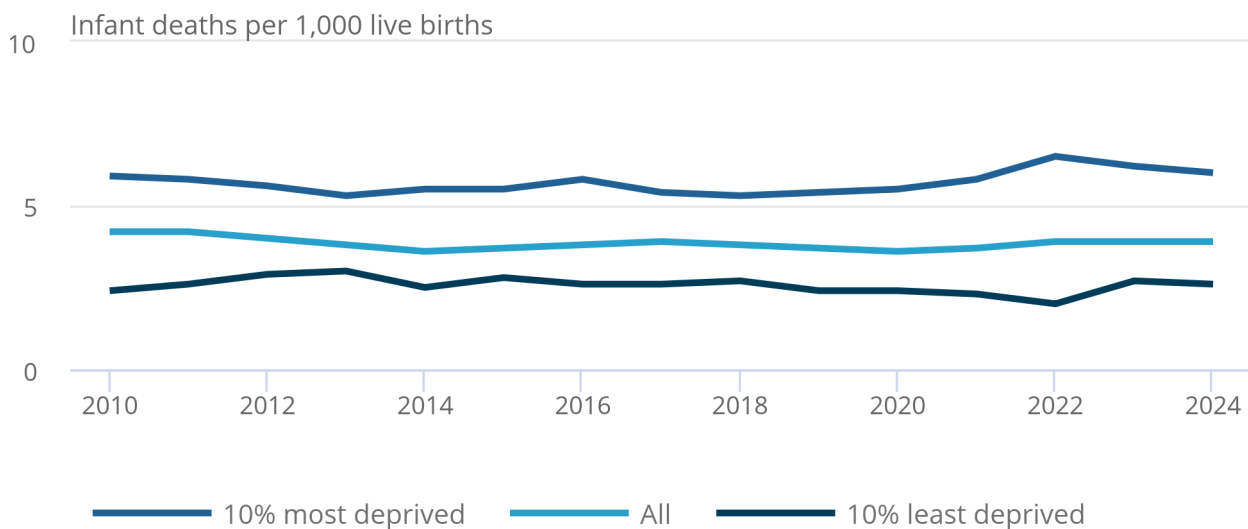
Infants from the most deprived 10% of areas in England had a mortality rate of 6.0 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2024. This was more than double the mortality rate of infants from the 10% of areas with the lowest deprivation levels (2.6 deaths per 1,000 live births) (Figure 4).

### Figure 4: Infants from the most deprived areas have the highest mortality rate

Infant mortality rate, by English index of multiple deprivation (IMD), England, 2010 to 2024

## Figure 4: Infants from the most deprived areas have the highest mortality rate

Infant mortality rate, by English index of multiple deprivation (IMD), England, 2010 to 2024



Source: Child and infant mortality in England and Wales from the Office for National Statistics

#### Notes:

1. Years 2021 to 2024 are calculated based on 2025 IMD deciles. Previously published data may have slightly different values because of updated area classification.

## Parental occupation

Parental occupation is derived from the parent whose occupation is in the highest National Statistics Socio-economic classification system (NS-SEC) category.

In 2024, infants in England and Wales with a parent in an occupation classed as "other and not classified" had the highest mortality rates (7.3 deaths per 1,000 births), followed by parents in "semi-routine occupations" (6.5 deaths per 1,000 births). The occupations with the lowest infant mortality rate were "higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations" (2.7 deaths per 1,000 births).

## Ethnicity

Infants from Black and Asian ethnic groups in England and Wales consistently have higher mortality rates than those of other ethnicities (Figure 5).

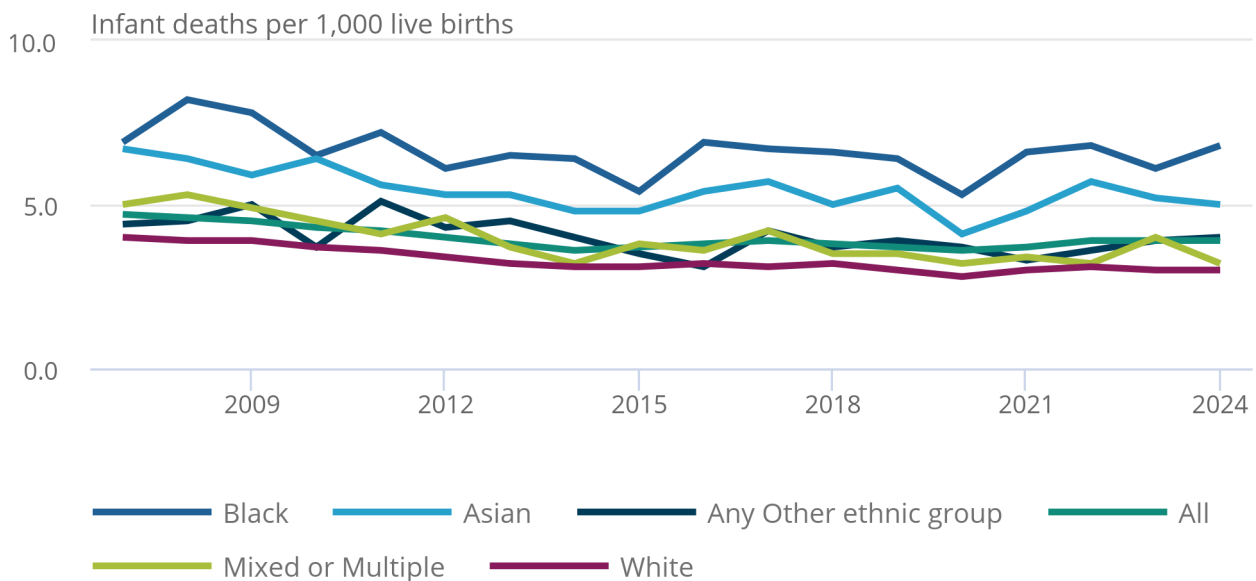
Meanwhile, infants from White ethnic groups consistently see the lowest mortality rates.

### Figure 5: Infants from the Black ethnic group consistently have the highest infant mortality rate

Infant mortality rates by ethnicity of infant, England and Wales, 2007 to 2024

## Figure 5: Infants from the Black ethnic group consistently have the highest infant mortality rate

Infant mortality rates by ethnicity of infant, England and Wales, 2007 to 2024



Source: Child and infant mortality in England and Wales from the Office for National Statistics

## Maternal age

Infants born to mothers aged under 20 years, or mothers aged 40 years and over, have had higher mortality rates in England and Wales over the past decade than infants born to mothers in their 20s or 30s (Figure 6).

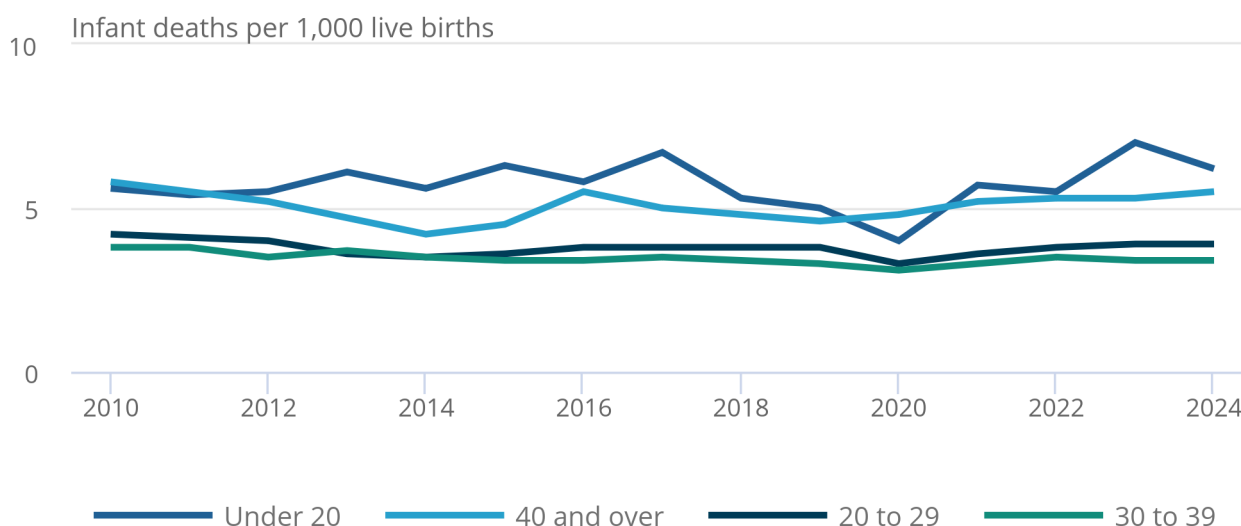
Infants born to mothers aged under 20 years had the highest mortality rate in 2024, at 6.2 deaths per 1,000 live births. Infants born to mothers aged 30 to 39 years had the lowest mortality rate, at 3.4 deaths per 1,000 live births.

### Figure 6: Infant mortality rate is highest for infants born to the youngest and oldest mothers

Infant mortality rates by age of mother, England and Wales, 2010 to 2024

## Figure 6: Infant mortality rate is highest for infants born to the youngest and oldest mothers

Infant mortality rates by age of mother, England and Wales, 2010 to 2024



Source: Child and infant mortality in England and Wales from the Office for National Statistics

## 5 . Definitions

### Child

Aged 1 to 15 years.

Child mortality rate

The number of child deaths per 100,000 population.

### Infant

Aged under 1 year.

## Infant mortality rate

The number of infant deaths per 1,000 live births.

## Neonatal

Aged under 28 days.

## Stillbirth

Born after 24 or more weeks completed gestation without, at any time, breathing or showing signs of life.

## 6 . Data on child and infant mortality

[Child and infant mortality \(by year of death\), England and Wales](#)

Dataset | Released 11 May 2026

Live births, stillbirths and linked infant deaths occurring annually in England and Wales, and associated risk factors.

[Infant mortality before their first birthday \(by year of birth\), England and Wales](#)

Dataset | Released 11 May 2026

Annual statistics on births and infant deaths based on babies born in a calendar year

## 7 . Data from other statistics producers

Data on stillbirths and infant deaths from:

- [Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency \(NISRA\)](#) are [broadly comparable](#) with our data
- [National Records of Scotland \(NRS\)](#) are [broadly comparable](#) with our data

## 8 . Quality, methods and data sources

### About the statistics

[Child and infant mortality statistics quality and methodology information \(QMI\)](#)

QMI | Last revised 11 May 2026

Quality and methodology information for child and infant mortality statistics, detailing the strengths and limitations of the data, methods used, accuracy of the data, and data uses and users.

[User guide to child and infant mortality statistics](#)

User guide | Last revised 11 May 2026

The user guide provides further information on data quality, legislation, and the procedures relating to mortality and cause of death coding. It also includes a full glossary of terms.

## Statistical designation

The Office for Statistics Regulation independently reviewed these accredited official statistics in May 2023. They comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) and should be labelled "accredited official statistics".

For more information on accredited official statistics, read the [Office for Statistics Regulation guidance](#).

## 9 . Related links

### [Births in England and Wales: 2024 \(refreshed populations\)](#)

Bulletin | Released 27 August 2025

Annual live births, stillbirths, maternities, and fertility rates in England and Wales by factors including parent age, parent country of birth, ethnicity, deprivation, gestational age and birthweight.

### [Deaths registered in England Wales: 2024](#)

Bulletin | Released 9 October 2025

Registered deaths by age, sex, selected underlying causes of death and the leading causes of death. Contains death rates and death registrations by area of residence and single year of age.

### [Unexplained deaths in infancy, England and Wales: 2023](#)

Bulletin | Released 27 October 2025

Annual data on sudden infant deaths in England and Wales and infant deaths for which the cause remained unascertained after a full investigation.

## 10 . Cite this bulletin

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