

Prevalence of congenital anomalies

Update: October 2024

Table 1 presents detailed data for the prevalence of specific anomalies, isolated or combined with other anomalies. A child with multiple anomalies is counted more than once. The prevalence for 1981-2022 was calculated per 10 000 births for:

- 1) all types of births (total prevalence), and
- 2) for live births only (live birth prevalence)

For anomalies that can be detected prenatally, large differences are visible between total prevalence and live birth prevalence, such as for anencephaly (a lethal condition) with a total prevalence of 3.8 per 10 000 and a live birth prevalence of 0.5 per 10 000.

The prevalence of the various congenital anomalies in other European countries participating in EUROCAT can be found on [the EUROCAT network website](#)

Table 1. Total prevalence and live birth prevalence of congenital anomalies per 10 000 births, 1981-2022

Congenital anomaly	All births		Live births		Congenital anomaly	All births		Live births	
	n	prev.	n	prev.		n	prev.	n	prev.
Nervous system anomalies	1597	23.3	927	13.6	Congenital heart defects	5233	76.4	4710	69.1
Neural tube defects	725	10.6	288	4.2	Severe congenital heart defects	1970	28.8	1638	24.0
Anencephaly and similar	259	3.8	32	0.5	Common arterial truncus	58	0.8	46	0.7
Spina bifida	392	5.7	228	3.3	Double outlet right ventricle	112	1.6	88	1.3
Encephalocele / meningocele*	74	1.1	28	0.4	Complete transposition of great arteries (D-TGA)	290	4.2	271	4.0
Severe microcephaly*	198	2.9	175	2.6	Single ventricle	57	0.8	39	0.6
Arhinencephaly / holoprosencephaly*	80	1.2	31	0.5	Corrected transposition of great arteries (L-TGA)	39	0.6	33	1.3
Hydrocephaly*	263	3.8	158	2.3	Ventricular septal defect (VSD)	2415	35.3	2260	33.2
Agenesis of corpus callosum*	99	1.4	72	1.1	Muscular VSD	966	14.1	937	13.8
Eye anomalies	506	7.4	488	7.2	Perimembraneous VSD	630	9.2	597	8.8
Anophthalmos / microphthalmos	103	1.5	89	1.3	Atrial septal defect (ASD)	727	10.6	673	9.9
Congenital cataract	175	2.6	173	2.5	Atrioventricular septal defect (AVSD)	367	5.4	274	4.0
Congenital glaucoma	31	0.5	31	0.5	Tetralogy and pentalogy of Fallot	236	3.4	204	3.0
Ear, face and neck anomalies	216	3.2	195	2.9	Tricuspid atresia and stenosis	97	1.4	70	1.0
Anotia and atresia / stenosis / stricture of external auditory canal	95	1.4	88	1.3	Ebstein's anomaly	44	0.6	34	0.5
					Pulmonary valve stenosis	538	7.9	530	7.8
					Pulmonary valve atresia	96	1.4	73	1.1

Congenital anomaly	All births		Live births	
	n	prev.	n	prev.
Aortic valve atresia / stenosis	177	2.6	165	2.4
Bicuspid aortic valve	241	3.5	222	3.3
Mitral valve atresia / stenosis	49	0.7	42	0.6
Hypoplastic left heart (HLH/HLHS)	209	3.1	123	1.8
Coarctation of aorta	331	4.8	316	4.6
Aortic atresia / interrupted aortic arch	39	0.6	35	0.5
Total anomalous pulmonary venous return (TAPVR)	58	0.8	54	0.8
Respiratory anomalies	211	3.1	165	2.4
Choanal stenosis or atresia	61	0.9	58	0.9
Oro-facial clefts*	1489	21.7	1347	19.8
Cleft lip with or without cleft palate*	983	14.4	882	12.9
Cleft palate*	506	7.4	465	6.8
Gastro-intestinal anomalies*	1290	18.8	1097	16.1
Oesophageal atresia with or without tracheo-oesophageal fistula	186	2.7	169	2.5
Duodenal atresia or stenosis*	75	1.1	64	0.9
Atresia or stenosis of other parts of small intestine*	58	0.8	54	0.8
Ano-rectal atresia / stenosis	300	4.4	234	3.4
Hirschsprung's disease	112	1.6	112	1.6
Atresia of bile ducts	41	0.6	41	0.6
Annular pancreas	42	0.6	38	0.6
Anomalies of intestinal fixation*	160	2.3	117	1.7
Diaphragmatic hernia	193	2.8	146	2.1
Genital anomalies	1463	21.4	1382	20.3
Hypospadias	1272	18.6	1261	18.5

Congenital anomaly	All births		Live births	
	n	prev.	n	prev.
Congenital anomalies of kidney and urinary tract (CAKUT)*#	2405	35.1	2032	29.8
Unilateral renal agenesis	216	3.2	166	2.4
Bilateral renal agenesis including Potter sequence	136	2.0	60	0.9
Multicystic renal dysplasia	234	3.4	195	2.9
Congenital hydronephrosis including ureter obstructions*#	916	13.4	869	12.8
Vesico-uretero-renal reflux grade 3-5 (VUR)	298	4.4	298	4.4
Lobulated, fused and horseshoe kidney and ectopic kidney	174	2.5	120	1.8
Bladder exstrophy and/or epispadias	75	1.1	61	0.9
Posterior urethral valves	128	1.9	123	1.8
Prune belly syndrome	23	0.3	13	0.2
Limb anomalies*	3923	57.3	3650	53.6
limb reduction defects (LRD)	460	6.7	361	5.3
Transverse LRD	81	1.2	57	0.8
Longitudinal preaxial LRD	85	1.2	63	0.9
Longitudinal postaxial LRD	42	0.6	36	0.5
Longitudinal central LRD	41	0.6	36	0.5
Intercalary LRD	13	0.2	7	0.1
Clubfoot - talipes equinovarus*	832	12.2	747	11.0
Hip dislocation*^	1596	23.3	1594	23.4
Polydactyly	730	10.7	680	10.0
Syndactyly	350	5.1	295	4.3
Abdominal wall defects	370	5.4	172	2.5
Omphalocele	244	3.6	108	1.6
Gastroschisis	104	1.5	63	0.9

Congenital anomaly	All births		Live births	
	n	prev.	n	prev.
Genetic disorders (genetic syndromes, hereditary skin disorders, skeletal dysplasias and chromosomal anomalies)	3884	56.7	2491	36.6
Skeletal dysplasias	221	3.2	162	2.4
Down syndrome / trisomy 21	1195	17.5	694	10.2
Patau syndrome / trisomy 13	123	1.8	40	0.6
Edwards syndrome / trisomy 18	357	5.2	65	1.0
Turner syndrome	230	3.4	104	1.5
Triploidy and polyploidy	98	1.4	14	0.2
Other anomalies / syndromes				
Craniosynostosis	155	2.3	151	2.2
Congenital constriction bands / amniotic band sequence	56	0.8	31	0.5
Situs inversus	58	0.8	47	0.7
VACTERL association	84	1.2	71	1.0
Pierre-Robin sequence	83	1.2	82	1.2

Only major congenital anomalies are shown, according to EUROCAT definitions. For more information see https://eu-rd-platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/system/files/public/eurocat/Guide_1.5_Chapter_3.2.pdf

All types of births are included: live births, still births, foetal deaths regardless of gestational age and terminations of pregnancy for foetal anomaly

* Only primary anomalies are shown. Club feet due to a neural tube defect or Potter sequence are not counted as clubfeet. For more information see the EUROCAT subgroups at https://eu-rd-platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/system/files/public/eurocat/Guide_1.5_Chapter_3.3.pdf

Vesicourethral reflux (VUR) is included in the CAKUT and hydronephrosis subgroup

^ from the year 2015 onwards we do not register hip dysplasia anymore (we only register hip dislocation)