Prevalence of congenital anomalies

Update: June 2026

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 1981-2024 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, 1981-2024

Congenital anomaly	All births		Live births	
	n	prev.	n	prev.
Nervous system anomalies	**1 681**	**23.5**	**960**	**13.5**
Neural tube defects	760	10.6	289	4.1
Anencephaly and similar	273	3.8	32	0.5
Spina bifida	410	5.7	229	3.2
Encephalocele / meningocele*	77	1.1	28	0.4
Severe microcephaly*	209	2.9	184	2.6
Arhinencephaly / holoprosencephaly*	87	1.2	32	0.5
Hydrocephaly*	266	3.8	159	2.3
Agenesis of corpus callosum*	108	1.5	74	1.0
Eye anomalies	**534**	**7.5**	**513**	**7.2**
Anophthalmos / microphthalmos	108	1.5	92	1.3
Congenital cataract	188	2.6	186	2.6
Congenital glaucoma	31	0.4	31	0.4
Ear, face and neck anomalies	**236**	**3.3**	**213**	**3.0**
Anotia and atresia / stenosis / stricture of external auditory canal	106	1.5	98	1.4

Congenital anomaly	All births		Live births	
	n	prev.	n	prev.
Congenital heart defects	**5 517**	**77.3**	**4 937**	**69.5**
Severe congenital heart defects	2 055	28.8	1,681	23.7
Common arterial truncus	60	0.8	47	0.7
Double outlet right ventricle	117	1.6	91	1.3
Complete transposition of great arteries (D-TGA)	294	4.1	274	3.9
Single ventricle	58	0.8	39	0.5
Corrected transposition of great arteries (L-TGA)	41	0.6	33	0.5
Ventricular septal defect (VSD)	2 540	35.6	2 375	33.4
Muscular VSD	1 034	14.5	1 002	14.1
Perimembraneous VSD	668	9.4	634	8.9
Atrial septal defect (ASD)	783	11.0	729	10.3
Atrioventricular septal defect (AVSD)	384	5.4	280	3.9
Tetralogy and pentalogy of Fallot	250	3.5	212	3.0
Tricuspid atresia and stenosis	99	1.4	71	1.0
Ebstein's anomaly	48	0.7	35	0.5
Pulmonary valve stenosis	553	7.7	545	7.7
Pulmonary valve atresia	102	1.4	78	1.1

Congenital anomaly	All births		Live births	
	n	prev.	n	prev.
Aortic valve atresia / stenosis	182	2.5	170	2.4
Bicuspid aortic valve	260	3.6	241	3.4
Mitral valve atresia / stenosis	50	0.7	43	0.6
Hypoplastic left heart (HLH/HLHS)	227	3.2	124	1.7
Coarctation of aorta	339	4.7	324	4.6
Aortic atresia / interrupted aortic arch	38	0.5	34	0.5
Total anomalous pulmonary venous return (TAPVR)	59	0.8	55	0.8
Respiratory anomalies	**272**	**3.8**	**202**	**2.8**
Choanal stenosis or atresia	65	0.9	62	0.9
Oro-facial clefts*	**1 555**	**21.8**	**1 404**	**19.8**
Cleft lip with or without cleft palate*	1 025	14.4	916	12.9
Cleft palate*	530	7.4	488	6.9
Gastro-intestinal anomalies*	**1 298**	**18.2**	**1 090**	**15.3**
Oesophageal atresia with or without tracheo-oesophageal fistula	191	2.7	172	2.4
Duodenal atresia or stenosis*	79	1.1	68	1.0
Atresia or stenosis of other parts of small intestine*	64	0.9	60	0.8
Ano-rectal atresia / stenosis	311	4.4	237	3.3
Hirschsprung's disease	112	1.6	112	1.6
Atresia of bile ducts	42	0.6	42	0.6
Annular pancreas	43	0.6	39	0.5
Anomalies of intestinal fixation*	162	2.3	119	1.7
Diaphragmatic hernia	201	2.8	150	2.1
Genital anomalies	**1 549**	**22.1**	**1 464**	**21.0**
Hypospadias	1 394	19.5	1 383	19.5

Congenital anomaly	All births		Live births	
	n	prev.	n	prev.
Congenital anomalies of kidney and urinary tract (CAKUT)*#	**2 604**	**36.5**	**2 197**	**30.9**
Unilateral renal agenesis	234	3.3	182	2.6
Bilateral renal agenesis including Potter sequence	143	2.0	60	0.9
Multicystic renal dysplasia	245	3.6	212	3.0
Congenital hydronephrosis including ureter obstructions*#	1 002	14.0	949	13.4
Vesico-uretero-renal reflux grade 3-5 (VUR)	319	4.5	319	4.5
Lobulated, fused and horseshoe kidney and ectopic kidney	203	2.8	145	2.0
Bladder exstrophy and/or epispadias	78	1.1	62	0.9
Posterior urethral valves	134	1.9	128	1.8
Prune belly syndrome	23	0.3	13	0.2
Limb anomalies*	**3 369**	**47.2**	**3 015**	**42.4**
limb reduction defects (LRD)	475	6.7	366	5.2
Transverse LRD	84	1.2	58	0.8
Longitudinal preaxial LRD	93	1.3	66	0.9
Longitudinal postaxial LRD	42	0.6	36	0.5
Longitudinal central LRD	46	0.6	39	0.5
Intercalary LRD	13	0.2	7	0.1
Clubfoot - talipes equinovarus*	865	12.1	776	10.9
Hip dislocation*^	706	9.9	702	9.9
Polydactyly	784	11.0	730	10.3
Syndactyly	356	5.0	299	4.2
Abdominal wall defects	**396**	**5.5**	**175**	**2.5**
Omphalocele	267	3.7	110	1.5
Gastroschisis	105	1.5	64	0.9

Congenital anomaly	All births		Live births	
	n	prev.	n	prev.
Genetic disorders (genetic syndromes, hereditary skin disorders, skeletal dysplasias and chromosomal anomalies)	**4 013**	**56.2**	**2 541**	**35.8**
Skeletal dysplasias	235	3.3	170	2.4
Down syndrome / trisomy 21	1 270	17.8	710	10.0
Patau syndrome / trisomy 13	136	1.9	42	0.6
Edwards syndrome / trisomy 18	386	5.4	65	0.9
Turner syndrome	252	3.5	117	1.6
Triploidy and polyploidy	103	1.4	14	0.2
Other anomalies / syndromes				
Craniosynostosis	162	2.3	158	2.2
Congenital constriction bands / amniotic band sequence	55	0.8	30	0.4
Situs inversus	59	0.8	47	0.7
VACTERL association	86	1.2	72	1.0
Pierre-Robin sequence	89	1.2	88	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)