

The global picture

- Close to 1 million children die each year from the complication of premature birth, and globally, it's a leading cause of death in children under 5 ¹

Premature birth

- Around the world just over 13 million babies are born prematurely every year and most preterm births occur in sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia ¹

Neonatal mortality – the number of babies who die within their first 28 days of life

- The country with the highest neonatal mortality rate in the world is South Sudan, at a rate of 40 per 1,000 live births in 2021. ²
- Other countries with high rates of neonatal mortality are in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. These include Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Nigeria. ²
- Countries that have the lowest rates include Singapore (1 per 1,000 live births) and Iceland (1 per 1,000 live births). ²
- The UK ranks well globally, however, whilst the rate of neonatal mortality has improved since 1990, latest figures stand at 3 per 1,000 live births. ²

¹ World Health Organisation (2023) *Preterm birth* [online]. Available from: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/preterm-birth> (Accessed 6 June 2023).

² World Bank (2021) *World Bank Open: Data Mortality rate, neonatal* [online]. Available from: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.DYN.NMRT> (Accessed 6 June 2023).