United Kingdom

Country profile

For Demographic and Health Surveys, the years refer to when the Surveys were conducted. Estimates from the Surveys refer to three or five years before the Surveys.

United Kingdom and the world

1. Maternal mortality ratio: global, regional and country data, 2005

Maternal death is defined as the death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, from any cause related to the pregnancy or its management but not from accidental or incidental causes. The maternal mortality ratio is the number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births per year. The ratio in the United Kingdom is 8 per 100,000 live births, which is slightly lower than the average of 9 per 100,000 live births in the developed regions of the world and much lower than the average of 400 per 100,000 live births globally.

2. Lifetime risk of maternal death (1 in N), 2005

The lifetime risk of maternal death is the estimated risk of an individual woman dying from pregnancy or childbirth during her adult lifetime based on maternal mortality and the fertility rate in the country. The lifetime risk of dying from pregnancy-related causes in the United Kingdom is very low (1 in 8,200), similar to that of other high-income countries (1 in 7,300). This differs from the rest of the world, where the average lifetime risk is 1 in 92, and in sub-Saharan Africa, where it is 1 in 22.

Demographic and health data

3. Total population (in thousands), 2006

60,512

60,512 (2006)


A maternal death is defined as the death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy from any cause related to the pregnancy or its management but not from accidental or incidental causes. The most frequent causes of maternal deaths in high-income countries (for 1997–2002) were other direct causes, embolism, haemorrhage, and hypertensive disorders. There are no country-specific data for the United Kingdom.

5. Total fertility

The total fertility is the average number of children that would be born to a woman over her lifetime. According to a survey conducted in 2006, the total fertility rate was 1.8 per woman in the United Kingdom.
6. **Annual number of births**

The total annual number of births in the United Kingdom is estimated to be 728 000 for 2005–2010.

![Births per year (in thousands)](image1)

7. **Perinatal and neonatal mortality rates**

Perinatal mortality refers to deaths of fetuses in the womb and of newborn babies early after delivery. It includes (1) the death of a fetus in the womb after 22 weeks of gestation and during childbirth and (2) the death of a live-born child within the first seven days of life. The perinatal mortality rate reflects the availability and quality of both maternal and newborn health care. According to data from 2006, the perinatal mortality rate was about 8 per 1000 pregnancies. Neonatal mortality refers to the number of newborn deaths during the first 28 completed days of life. In 2006, the neonatal mortality rate in the United Kingdom was about 3 per 1000 pregnancies.

![Perinatal mortality and Neonatal mortality](image2)

8. **Adolescent pregnancy: Births by women 15–19 years old**

Adolescent pregnancy is pregnancy in an adolescent girl (girls 10–19 years old). The adolescent fertility rate is the number of births per 1000 women aged 15–19 years of age. In the United Kingdom, according to a survey conducted in 2006, the rate was 24 per 1000 women aged 15–19 years. The United Kingdom has one of the highest adolescent pregnancy rates in western Europe, although the rates are reported to be declining.

![Births of adolescents under 16% by year](image3)

9. **Births and abortions among adolescents and the youth**

The adolescent and youth birth rates refers to the annual number of births per 1000 women aged 15–19 and 20–24 years of age, respectively. The abortion rate is a calculation of the number of women who have abortions out of all women in that age group in a given year expressed per 1000 adolescents or youth. In the United Kingdom, the adolescent abortion rate was 34 per 1000 adolescent women and 44 per 1000 women among the youth.

![Births and Abortions among Adolescents and the Youth](image4)

10. **Prevalence of modern contraceptive use by type**

Modern contraception includes oral and injectable hormones, intrauterine devices (IUD), diaphragms, hormonal implants, female and male sterilization, spermicides, and condoms. The graph shows the percentage of women of reproductive age (15–49 years) who are using (or whose partner is using) any of these contraceptive methods at a particular point in time. In the United Kingdom, sterilization is the most common form of contraception used by women of reproductive age (33%) followed by the oral contraceptive pill (26%).

![Prevalence of Modern Contraceptives Use by type](image5)
11. Unmet need for family planning  Unknown
The unmet need for family planning is the proportion of all women who are at risk of pregnancy and want to space or limit their childbearing but are not using contraceptives.


12. Family planning: modern contraceptive use by age group
Antenatal care visits (ANC) include all visits made by pregnant women for reasons relating to pregnancy. There are no country-specific data for the United Kingdom.

13. Utilization of skilled birth attendants
A skilled birth attendant is an accredited health professional – such as a midwife, doctor or nurse – who has been educated and trained to proficiency in the skills needed to manage normal (uncomplicated) pregnancies, childbirth and the immediate postnatal period, and in the identification, management and referral of complications among women and newborns. All women should have access to skilled care during pregnancy and at delivery to ensure that complications are detected and managed. In the United Kingdom, from 2000–2006, coverage with a skilled birth attendant during delivery was almost universal: 99%.


14. Contraceptive use by subregion
Caesarean section is a surgical procedure in which incisions are made through a woman’s abdomen and womb to deliver her baby. It is performed whenever abnormal conditions complicate vaginal delivery, threatening the life and health of the mother and/or the baby. There are no country-specific data for the United Kingdom.

15. Low birth weight
Babies weighing less than 2500 g at birth are considered to have low birth weight. According to data for the United Kingdom for 1990–1999, of the babies who were weighed at birth, about 8% were reported to weigh less than 2500 g (2.5 kg). Low-birth-weight babies often face severe short- and long-term health consequences and tend to have higher mortality and morbidity.


Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer among women worldwide. Breast cancer screening is the regular examination of a woman’s breasts to detect breast cancer early. It may include mammography (breast X-ray) and/or a physical examination of the breasts by a health care professional. Regular breast screening can detect cancer when it is small, which means there is a better chance of treating the cancer successfully, it may be less likely to spread and there may be more treatment options. In the United Kingdom, from 2000–2006, 75% of women 50–69 years old received mammography. Cervical cancer is the second most common type of cancer among women worldwide. Cervical cancer screening is done using a Pap smear, a sample taken directly from the cervix. The Pap smear has been credited with dramatically reducing the incidence and mortality of cervical cancer. In the United Kingdom, from 2000–2006, 70% of women 18–69 years old received a Pap smear.

17. Breast screening by wealth status

At present, breast cancer, along with cervical, colorectal and possibly oral cancer, is one of the few types of cancer for which early screening has been shown to reduce mortality from the disease. Sufficient evidence shows that mammography screening among women aged 50–69 years could reduce mortality from breast cancer by 15–25%. Estimates from surveys show that the prevalence of mammography varies significantly by wealth. In the 25 Member States of the WHO European Region surveyed, where breast screening is generally higher than in low-income countries, screening among women in the lowest wealth quintile was lower than among their wealthier counterparts.

18. Financial flow

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<th>Financial flow (per capita total expenditure on health at average exchange rate in US dollars) 2005</th>
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19. Human resources

The work of at least 23 health workers (doctors, nurses or midwives) per 10 000 population is estimated to be necessary to support the delivery of the basic interventions required to achieve the Millennium Development Goals related to health. Globally, 57 countries have been identified with critical shortages below this minimum. These countries have a severe crisis in human resources for health. Of these 57 countries, 36 are in sub-Saharan Africa. The United Kingdom, with about 151 health workers (as defined above) per 10 000 population, is well above this minimum threshold and is spared from facing this crisis daily, in which mothers and children lack access to proper maternal and child care, HIV/TB and malaria care, and sexual and reproductive health information and services, including skilled birth attendants.

Increasing the human resources around the world and establishing a balance between the services needed and the personnel available, and their distribution, are key elements of a well-functioning health system and critical requirements for achieving Millennium Development Goals.

20. Ratification of treaties and support of international consensus

- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women: Yes
- Convention on the Rights of the Child: Yes
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: Yes
- International Conference on Population and Development: Yes
- Fourth World Conference on Women: Yes

Sources:

21. Other determinants of health: water, sanitation, communication and road networks

- Fixed-line and mobile phone subscribers (per 100 population): 171 (2006)
- Internet users (per 100 population): 62 (2006)
- Roads paved (% of total roads): 100 (2005)
- Improved water source (% of population with access): 100 (2006)
- Improved sanitation facilities (% of urban population with access): Unknown


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