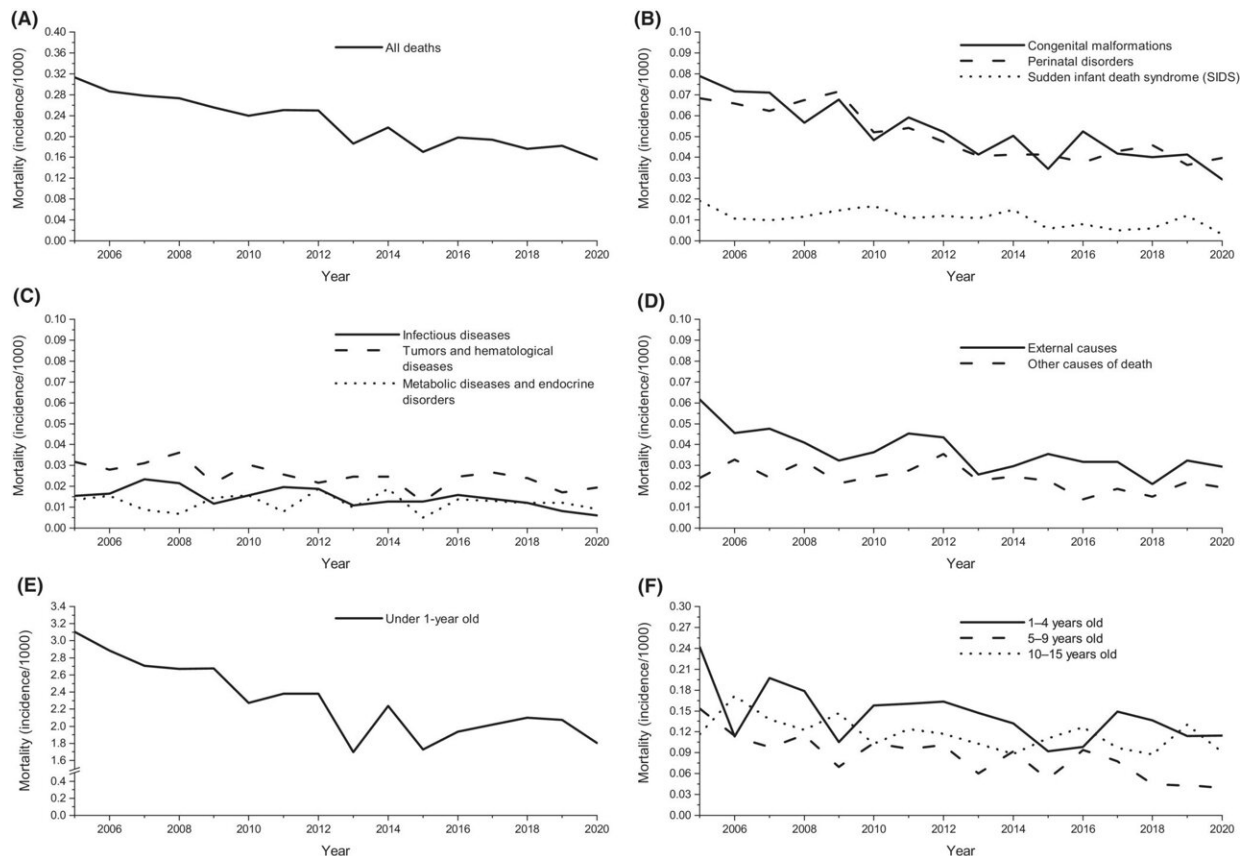


New study shows a further 50% decline in already low child mortality in Finland

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Mortality among children under 16 years of age in Finland in 2005–2020 by causes of death. Credit: *Acta Paediatrica* (2024). DOI: 10.1111/apa.17390

According to a study by researchers at the University of Oulu, child mortality in Finland dropped by 50% between 2005 and 2020.

A total of 3,685 children under 16 years of age died in Finland between 2005 and 2020. Slightly more boys than girls were among the deceased. The majority of those who died were under the age of 1 year. The findings are [published](#) in the journal *Acta Paediatrica*.

The most common causes of death differed between those under and over the age of 1 year. Among infants, the leading causes of death were prematurity, [congenital malformations](#), and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). For those over the age of 1 year, the most common causes of death were related to external factors such as [traffic accidents](#) and other injuries, as well as cancers.

The study used data from the Population Information System of the Digital and Population Data Services Agency and mortality statistics from Statistics Finland.

Child mortality has decreased significantly in Finland since the 20th century. Although Finland already ranks among the countries with very low [child mortality](#) rates, improvements are still being made, according to the study.

"Child and adolescent mortality can be considered an important indicator of the quality and effectiveness of health care, and it is encouraging to see that positive developments are still occurring," says Riikka Sallinen, the lead author of the study at the University of Oulu.

According to the researchers, the results suggest that advancements in [clinical care](#), research, and health policy decisions can continue to reduce child mortality. However, more information is still needed, for example, about the [risk factors](#) associated with mortality.

Globally, child mortality remains a significant issue, although there has been a notable decline in child deaths in recent decades. A large

proportion of child and adolescent deaths could still be prevented, the researchers suggest.

More information: Riikka H. Sallinen et al, A Finnish nationwide register-based study shows a further 50% decline in already low child mortality, *Acta Paediatrica* (2024). [DOI: 10.1111/apa.17390](https://doi.org/10.1111/apa.17390)

Provided by University of Oulu

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