

INTERNATIONAL INFANT MORTALITY

In 2007, the U.S. infant mortality rate (6.8 infant deaths per 1,000 live births) was higher than that of many other industrialized nations. Differences in infant mortality rates among industrialized nations may reflect variation in the definition, measurement, and reporting of fetal and infant deaths. However, recent analyses of the differences in gestational age-specific infant mortality indicate that this disparity is most likely related to the high rate of preterm birth in the U.S.¹ Infants born preterm (or less than 37 weeks gestation) have higher rates of death and disability than infants born at term (37 weeks gestation or more).² Although the United States compares favorably with European countries with respect to the survival of infants born preterm, the higher rate of preterm birth in the U.S. overall has a significant impact on the infant mortality rate.

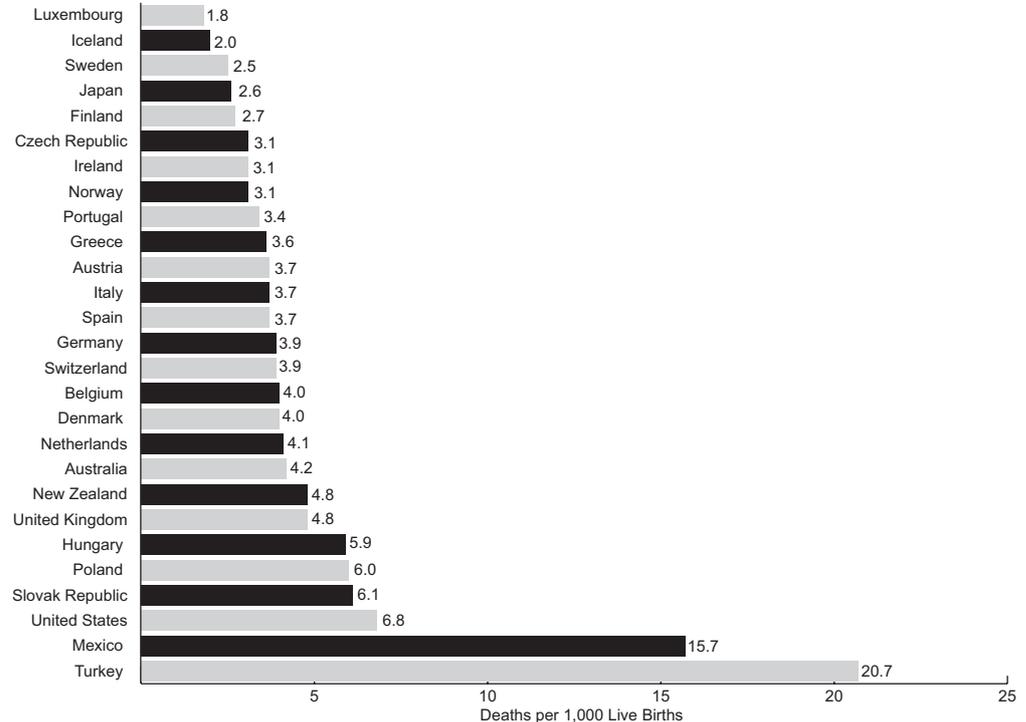
In 2007, the U.S. infant mortality rate was more than twice that of nine other industrialized countries (Luxembourg, Iceland, Sweden, Japan, Finland, Czech Republic, Ireland, Norway, and Portugal). Luxembourg had the lowest rate (1.8 per 1,000), followed by Iceland and Sweden (2.0 and 2.5 deaths per 1,000 live births, respectively).

1 MacDorman MF and Mathews TJ. *Behind international rankings of infant mortality: how the US compares with Europe.* Int J Health Serv. 2010;40(4):577-88.

2 MacDorman, MF, and Mathews, TJ. *Recent Trends in Infant Mortality in the United States.* NCHS Data Brief No. 9. National Center for health Statistics, Hyattsville, MD, 2008.

International Infant Mortality Rates, Selected Countries,* 2007

Source (II.4): The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)



*2007 data were not available for all Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries.