Breast cancer burden in EU-27

Breast cancer is a malignant tumour that has developed from cells in the breast. It usually begins either in the cells of the lobules (the milk-producing glands) or in the ducts that drain the milk from the lobules to the nipple. Less commonly, breast cancer can begin in the stromal tissues, which include the fatty and fibrous connective tissues of the breast.

It is estimated that breast cancer accounts for 13.3% of all new cancer cases diagnosed in EU-27 countries in 2020. This makes it the most frequently occurring cancer. It is estimated that it accounts for 28.7% of all new cancers in women.

2020 new cases (incidence) and deaths (mortality) estimates

**NEW CASES OF BREAST CANCER**
per 100,000 women*

- 100.0 - 118.8
- 118.8 - 137.6
- 137.6 - 156.4
- 156.4 - 175.2
- 175.2 - 194.0

**DEATHS CAUSED BY BREAST CANCER**
per 100,000 women*

- 23.8 - 28.9
- 28.9 - 34.0
- 34.0 - 39.1
- 39.1 - 44.2
- 44.2 - 49.3

*Age-standardised rate (European new) per 100,000

Source: ECIS – European Cancer Information System

https://ecis.jrc.ec.europa.eu

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Breast cancer is estimated to be the most diagnosed tumour among all cancer types and the first cause of cancer death among women in 2020.

Estimated breast cancer incidence and mortality rates in 2020 vary two-fold across EU-27.

Incidence trends in the EU-27 are mainly increasing. Multiple factors explain these changes, including reproductive factors, increasing obesity and physical inactivity as well as increased screening intensity.

Mortality trends in the EU-27 tend to be in decline. This is mainly due to effective treatment and tools for detecting the disease at early stages.

The five-year survival of breast cancer patients diagnosed in 2000-2007 is highest in Northern and Western Europe and lowest in Eastern Europe. National differences can in part be explained by varying levels of healthcare expenditure and resulting quality of diagnosis and treatment.

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- Breast cancer is estimated to be the most diagnosed tumour among all cancer types and the first cause of cancer death among women in 2020.
- Incidence trends in the EU-27 are mainly increasing. Multiple factors explain these changes, including reproductive factors, increasing obesity and physical inactivity as well as increased screening intensity.
- Mortality trends in the EU-27 tend to be in decline. This is mainly due to effective treatment and tools for detecting the disease at early stages.
- The five-year survival of breast cancer patients diagnosed in 2000-2007 is highest in Northern and Western Europe and lowest in Eastern Europe. National differences can in part be explained by varying levels of healthcare expenditure and resulting quality of diagnosis and treatment.

Grateful acknowledgement is given to the European cancer registries as the data source for the indicators reported in the European Cancer Information System (ECIS).

This factsheet reports information from ECIS.

For details, please visit: [https://ecis.jrc.ec.europa.eu](https://ecis.jrc.ec.europa.eu) or scan this QR code:

[https://cancer-code-europe.iarc.fr](https://cancer-code-europe.iarc.fr)