

Statistical bulletin

Death registration summary statistics, England and Wales: 2023

Number of deaths registered by year, sex, area of usual residence and selected underlying cause of death.

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To be announced

Notice

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Following the Health and Social Care Statistical Outputs consultation commissioned by the Health and Social Care Statistics Leadership Forum, we are improving some of our statistical products, so they are more coherent and efficient. Additionally, we are ensuring that our resources are deployed in producing statistics for maximum possible benefit.

Full details of changes to this product, and our other health and social care products, are available in the Health and Social Care Statistical Outputs Consultation Response. We welcome user feedback on our releases. Please use the contact details on individual publication web pages to share feedback.

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1 . Main points

- In 2023, there were 581,363 deaths registered in England and Wales; this was 4,203 (0.7%) more deaths than in 2022, and 27,528 (4.7%) more deaths than the five-year average (2017 to 2022 excluding 2020).
- In England, 544,054 deaths were registered in 2023, which was 3,721 (0.7%) more deaths than 2022 and 25,895 (4.8%) above the five-year average; in Wales, 36,054 deaths were registered, which was 360 (1.0%) more deaths than 2022 and 1,521 (4.2%) above the five-year average.
- There were more male deaths registered (295,416 deaths) than female (285,947 deaths) in 2023, continuing the trend seen in 2021 and 2022.
- Deaths were above the five-year average in every English region in 2023; the region with the largest percentage of deaths above the five-year average was the South West of England (6.3% higher), and the region with the smallest was London (0.8% higher).
- The leading cause of death in England and Wales in 2023 was dementia and Alzheimer's disease, with 66,876 deaths (11.5% of all deaths); this percentage was higher than in 2022 (65,967 deaths, 11.4% of all deaths).
- The leading cause of death among males in 2023 was ischaemic heart diseases (38,376 deaths, 13.0% of all male deaths registered), and among females was dementia and Alzheimer's disease (42,882 deaths, 15.0% of all female deaths registered); this pattern was unchanged from 2022.

2 . Death registration summary statistics, England and Wales, 2023 data

[Deaths registered summary statistics, England and Wales](#)

Dataset | Released 16 May 2024

Number of deaths registered by year, sex, area of usual residence and selected underlying cause of death.

3 . Glossary

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines coronaviruses as "a large family of viruses that are known to cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)." Between 2001 and 2018, there were 12 deaths in England and Wales due to a coronavirus infection other than COVID-19, with a further 13 deaths mentioning the virus as a contributory factor on the death certificate.

COVID-19 is a disease caused by a type of coronavirus. [Further information is available from the WHO.](#)

Registration delay

Mortality statistics are compiled from information supplied when deaths are certified and registered as part of civil registration, a legal requirement. According to the [Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953](#), a death should be registered within five days unless it is referred to a coroner for investigation. Mortality statistics for a given time period can be based on occurrence (death date) or registration (registration date); registration delay is the difference between date of occurrence and date of registration.

4 . Measuring the data

Figures in this release only represent deaths that were registered in England and Wales. These include some deaths of individuals whose usual residence was outside England and Wales (1,255 of the 581,363 deaths registered in 2023, an increase of 122 from 2022). These deaths are included in totals for England and Wales combined but excluded from breakdowns for England and Wales separately. Any deaths of residents that happened abroad are not included.

Data coverage, timeliness and registration delays

In England and Wales, deaths should be registered within five days of the death occurring, but there are some situations that result in the registration of the death being delayed. For more information, see our [Impact of registration delays on mortality statistics in England and Wales article](#).

Coding of deaths

Deaths are cause coded using the World Health Organization's (WHO) [International Classification of Diseases, 10th edition \(ICD-10\)](#). Deaths are coded to ICD-10 using IRIS software (version 2013). Cause of death reported here represents the final underlying cause of death for ages 28 days and over. This takes account of additional information received from medical practitioners or coroners after the death has been registered.

In 2011, there was an update to the coding framework (detailed in our [bridge coding study](#)) used to code cause of death. This meant that deaths from vascular dementia that were previously coded to cerebrovascular disease (I60 to I69) would be coded to vascular dementia (F01). There were further changes to the framework in 2014 (detailed in our [Impact of the implementation of IRIS software bulletin](#)) where deaths that were coded to chest infection (J98) would now be coded to chest infection (J22). Those deaths that mentioned dementia (F01 or F03) would now be coded to dementia (F01 or F03). Additionally, deaths that were previously coded to aspiration pneumonia (I69) where dementia was mentioned on the death certificate would now be coded to dementia (F01 or F03).

For deaths registered from 1 January 2022, cause of death is coded to the ICD-10 classification using MUSE 5.8 software. Deaths registered between 1 January 2020 and 31 December 2021 were coded using MUSE 5.5 and previous years were coded to IRIS 4.2.3. For more information, see our [Cause of death coding in mortality statistics, software changes article](#).

Leading causes of death

This release provides information about the number of deaths and causes of death registered in 2022; this includes deaths where coronavirus (COVID-19) was the underlying cause of death.

When interpreting these mortality statistics, please note that:

- death statistics are compiled from information supplied when deaths are certified and registered as part of civil registration, a legal requirement
- this bulletin provides both summary figures and more detail on both individual causes of death and selected leading causes of death (see our [Leading causes of death in England and Wales methodology](#)), where individual causes are aggregated using a list developed by the World Health Organization (WHO), modified for use in England and Wales
- deaths where COVID-19 was the underlying cause have been included in this release using the ICD-10 definition: U07.1, U07.2 and U10.9
- summary figures published in [our accompanying dataset](#) include analysis of causes of death by broad disease groupings; a list of these is available in our [User guide to mortality statistics](#).

5 . Strengths and limitations

Because the figures in this release are based on number of deaths, they are not provided to be comparable across groups or time. This is because population size and age structure has not been accounted for. This means we are able to provide the public with timely statistics, and allows our future releases to use finalised data (rather than provisional), increasing the efficiency of our statistics. Finalised deaths registration figures, including age-standardised mortality rates, will be released in our [Deaths registered in England and Wales bulletin](#) in summer 2024.

More quality and methodology information on strengths, limitations, appropriate uses, and how the data were created is available in our [Mortality statistics in England and Wales quality and methodology information \(QMI\) report](#) and our [User guide to mortality statistics](#).

6 . Related links

[Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales](#)

Bulletin | Released weekly

Provisional number of deaths registered in England and Wales in the latest weeks.

[Deaths registered in England and Wales: 2022](#)

Bulletin | Released 27 January 2023

Registered deaths by age, sex, selected underlying causes of death and the leading causes of death. Death rates and registrations by residence area, single year of age.

[Excess deaths in England and Wales: March 2020 to December 2022](#)

Article | Released 9 March 2023

Number of excess deaths, including deaths due to coronavirus (COVID-19) and due to other causes. Including breakdowns by age, sex and geography.

7 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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