

Statistical bulletin

Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional: 20 May 2022

Provisional counts of the number of deaths registered in England and Wales, including deaths involving coronavirus (COVID-19), in the latest weeks for which data are available.



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1 . Main points

- In the week ending 20 May 2022 (Week 20), 11,520 deaths were registered in England and Wales; of these deaths, 547 mentioned "novel coronavirus (COVID-19)", accounting for 4.7% of all deaths.
- This is a decrease compared with the week ending 13 May 2022 (Week 19) when the number of all-cause deaths registered was 12,048; of these, COVID-19 accounted for 719 deaths (6.0%).

Table 1: Deaths registered in England and Wales, week ending 20 May 2022 (Week 20 2022)

Week 20 2022	England and Wales	England	Wales
Total deaths (all causes)	11,520	10,779	720
Excess deaths	1,416	1,329	89
Percentage change compared to 5-year average (2016 to 2019 and 2021)	14.0%	14.1%	14.1%
Deaths involving COVID-19	547	528	18
Percentage of deaths involving COVID-19	4.7%	4.9%	2.5%
Total deaths (Week 11 2020 to Week 20 2022)	1,310,881	1,228,354	80,720
Total involving COVID-19 (Week 11 2020 to Week 20 2022)	178,723	168,104	10,328
Total excess deaths (Week 11 2020 to Week 20 2022)	133,432	127,962	6,798

Source: Office for National Statistics – Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales

- Of the 547 deaths involving COVID-19 in Week 20, 61.4% (336 deaths) had this recorded as the underlying cause of death, compared with 62.6% in Week 19.
- The number of deaths was above the five-year average in private homes (25.5% above, 662 excess deaths), care homes (11.0% above, 223 excess deaths), hospitals (10.4% above, 485 excess deaths) and other settings (5.6% above, 46 excess deaths) in Week 20 in England and Wales.
- The number of deaths registered in the UK in the week ending 20 May 2022 (Week 20) was 13,023, which was 13.7% above the five-year average (1,573 excess deaths); of these deaths, 614 involved COVID-19, which was 182 less than in Week 19.

Figure 1: Total deaths from all causes were above the five-year average in Week 20

Number of deaths registered by week, England and Wales, 28 December 2019 to 20 May 2022

Notes:

1. Figures include deaths of non-residents.
2. Based on date a death was registered rather than occurred.
3. All figures are provisional.
4. The International Classification of Diseases, 10th Edition (ICD-10) definitions are available in the [Measuring the data](#) section.
5. The number of deaths registered in a week are affected when bank holidays occur.
6. Information relating to the five-year averages used can be found in the [Measuring the data](#) section.
7. The weekly 2015 to 2019 average can be found in the 2021 version of the deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional dataset. This is in the [accompanying datasets](#).

Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

2 . Deaths data

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

Dataset | Released 31 May 2022

Provisional counts of the number of deaths registered in England and Wales, by age, sex and region, in the latest weeks for which data are available. Includes data on coronavirus (COVID-19) deaths.

[Death registrations and occurrences by local authority and health board](#)

Dataset | Released 31 May 2022

Provisional counts of the number of deaths registered in England and Wales, including deaths involving COVID-19, by local authority, health board and place of death in the latest weeks for which data are available.

[Number of deaths in care homes notified to the Care Quality Commission, England](#)

Dataset | Released 31 May 2022

Provisional counts of deaths in care homes caused by COVID-19 by local authority. Published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

[Care home resident deaths registered in England and Wales, provisional](#)

Dataset | Released 31 May 2022

Provisional counts of the number of care home resident deaths registered in England and Wales, by region, including deaths involving COVID-19, in the latest weeks for which data are available.

[Deaths registered weekly due to COVID-19 by region of usual residence, provisional](#)

Dataset | Released 8 March 2022

Provisional counts of the number of deaths due to coronavirus (COVID-19) registered by region of usual residence in England and Wales.

Try the new way to filter and download these data:

- [Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales by age and sex: COVID-19](#)
- [Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales by region: COVID-19](#)
- [Death registrations and occurrences by local authority and place of death](#)

3 . Glossary

Coronavirus (COVID-19) deaths

COVID-19 deaths are those deaths registered in England and Wales in the stated week where COVID-19 was mentioned on the death certificate. A doctor can certify the involvement of COVID-19 based on symptoms and clinical findings – a positive test result is not required. Definitions of COVID-19 for deaths in Scotland and Northern Ireland are similar to England and Wales.

4 . Measuring the data

To meet user needs, we publish very timely but provisional counts of death registrations in England and Wales in [our Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional dataset](#). These are presented:

- by sex
- by age group
- for regions (within England)
- for Wales as a whole

To allow time for registration and processing, figures are published 11 days after the week ends. Because of the rapidly changing situation, we also provide provisional updated totals for death occurrences based on the latest available death registrations, up to 28 May 2022.

The five-year average is designed to show us the expected number of deaths based on the most recent years. Using five years means that random year-on-year fluctuations are smoothed.

The 2015 to 2019 five-year average was used to compare against deaths registered in 2020 and 2021 because it provides a comparison with the number of deaths expected per week in a usual (non- coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic) year. The further we move away from the five years in question, the less robust the measure is because of changes in population numbers, age and structure.

Deaths registered in 2022 will be compared with the 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2021 five-year average. As 2021 is a coronavirus pandemic year, which does increase some of the expected deaths in a week, other comparisons are also used including week-by-week and 2021 only.

The number of registration days in a reference period can affect mortality statistics. For example, bank holidays can affect the number of registrations within a week or month because of the closure of registration offices. We often see high death registrations in the first two weeks of January when registration services are dealing with any backlog from the Christmas period.

Coronavirus

This weekly release now provides a separate breakdown of the number of deaths involving coronavirus. This breakdown includes deaths where COVID-19 or suspected COVID-19 was mentioned anywhere on the death certificate, including in combination with other health conditions.

If a death certificate mentions COVID-19, it will not always be the main cause of death but may be a contributory factor. This bulletin summarises the latest weekly information and will be updated each week during the coronavirus pandemic.

Data coverage

The data for 2020 are based on a 53-week year. When there are 52 weeks, we only cover 364 days of the 365 days in the year because the number of days in a week is seven. This results in one remaining day each calendar year not being included in the 52 weeks. With the occurrence of leap years, it is sometimes necessary to add a 53rd week to the end of the calendar, which was the case in 2020. This happens every five years, and the last time there was a Week 53 was in 2015. Given the low frequency of Week 53, it is more appropriate to compare the 2020 figures with the average for Week 52 than to compare them with a single year from five years previously. View more detail on the data coverage for the weekly deaths bulletin in [our Coronavirus and mortality in England and Wales methodology](#).

Influenza and pneumonia have been included for comparison in [our Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional dataset](#) as a well-understood cause of death involving respiratory infection that is likely to have somewhat similar risk factors to COVID-19.

Registration delays

This bulletin is based mainly on the date that deaths are registered, not the date of death, because of the time taken for a death to be registered. Deaths in England and Wales are normally registered within five days, but there can be a considerably longer delay in some circumstances, particularly when the death is referred to a coroner. More information on this issue can be found in [our Impact of registration delays on mortality statistics article](#).

We have developed a statistical model to estimate the number of deaths likely to have occurred in each week based on the previous pattern of registration delays, including the effects of bank holidays. You can find out more about this statistical model in [our Predicting total weekly death occurrences in England and Wales methodology](#). Results are shown in sheet 11 of [our Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional dataset](#).

Classification codes

From the week ending 26 February 2021 (Week 8), new International Classification of Diseases codes for COVID-19 issued by the World Health Organization were implemented for deaths involving COVID-19. View more detail about the additional classification codes for COVID-19 in [our Coronavirus and mortality in England and Wales methodology](#).

We will publish accompanying articles periodically. These will give enhanced information such as age-standardised and age-specific mortality rates for recent time periods and breakdowns of deaths involving COVID-19 by associated pre-existing health conditions.

For further information on data quality, legislation and procedures relating to mortality and a glossary of terms, view [our user guide to mortality statistics methodology](#).

5 . Strengths and limitations

Comparability

These weekly figures are for England and Wales only (the Office for National Statistics' (ONS) legal remit). They are from the formal death registration process and may include cases where the doctor completing the death certificate diagnosed possible cases of coronavirus (COVID-19), for example, where this was based on relevant symptoms, but no test was conducted. The ONS figures are different from the [daily surveillance figures on COVID-19 deaths published by the Department of Health and Social Care \(DHSC\) on GOV.UK](#), which are for the UK as a whole and its constituent countries.

On 1 February 2022, the UK Health Security Agency technical summary data series was revised to include deaths of positively tested individuals where the death occurred within 28 days, and deaths within 60 days of a positive test. You can find out more about these changes in [the UK Health Security Agency technical summary \(PDF, 443KB\)](#).

View more detail on the differences in definitions of COVID-19 deaths between sources, and the differences in definitions of COVID-19 deaths in care homes, in [our Coronavirus and mortality in England and Wales methodology](#).

Quality

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 QMI](#).

6 . Related links

[Deaths registered in England and Wales: 2020](#)

Bulletin | Released 6 July 2021

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

[Monthly mortality analysis, England and Wales: April 2022](#)

Bulletin | Released 20 May 2022

Provisional death registration data for England and Wales, broken down by sex, age and country. Includes deaths due to coronavirus (COVID-19) and leading causes of death.

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) latest insights](#)

Interactive tool | Updated as and when data become available

A live roundup of the latest data and trends about the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic from the ONS and other sources.

[Deaths registered in private homes, England and Wales: 2020 final and January to June 2021, provisional](#)

Article | Released 10 November 2021

Deaths registered in private homes by age, sex, place of occurrence and selected underlying causes of death and the leading causes of death.