

Statistical bulletin

Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional: week ending 5 January

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



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1 . Main points

- The number of deaths registered in the latest week (Week 1 2024) was affected by the New Year's Day bank holiday, and the previous week (Week 52 2023) was affected by the Christmas Day and Boxing Day bank holidays, so caution is needed when comparing across weeks and with the five-year average.
- In the week ending 5 January 2024 (Week 1), 11,946 deaths were registered in England and Wales (including non-residents); this was an increase in all deaths compared with the week ending 29 December 2023 (Week 52), when the number of all-cause deaths registered was 7,447.
- In the week ending 5 January 2024 (Week 1), 17% of deaths registered involved influenza or pneumonia (2,033 deaths), while 2.5% involved COVID-19 (301 deaths).
- Of deaths registered in the week ending 5 January 2024 (Week 1), 35.8% occurred within the previous seven days; median time from death to registration was eight days.
- The number of deaths was below the five-year average in private homes (5.5% below, 181 fewer deaths), hospitals (18.2% below, 1,190 fewer deaths), care homes (11.8% below, 358 fewer deaths) and other settings (3.6% below, 30 fewer deaths).
- The number of deaths registered in the UK in the week ending 5 January 2024 (Week 1) was 13,614, which was 12.7% lower than the five-year average (1,978 fewer deaths).

For more information on different measures of excess death and our current work around excess mortality, please read our blog post, [How do we measure expected and excess deaths?](#).

Data for death occurrences are now based on the latest available death registrations to align death registrations and occurrences data. Previously (in 2023 dataset), death occurrences data were extracted four days later and included some of the death registrations from the following week. Both death registrations and occurrences are now revised each week to provide users with the most accurate data.

2 . Deaths registered in England and Wales

In the week ending 5 January (Week 1), 11,946 deaths were registered in England and Wales. Of these, 11,178 were registered in England and 734 were registered in Wales (Table 1).

Table 1: Deaths registered in England and Wales, week ending 5 January (Week 1 2024)

Week 1 2024	England and Wales (including non-residents)	England Wales	
Total deaths (all causes)	11,946	11,178	734
Difference compared to 5-year average	-1,760	-1,614	-157
Percentage change compared to 5-year average (2018 to 2019 and 2021 to 2023)	-12.8%	-12.6%	-17.6%

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

Notes

1. Figures for "England and Wales" include non-residents. Therefore the sum of "England" and "Wales" which exclude non-residents, will differ from "England and Wales".
2. Based on date a death was registered rather than occurred. All figures are provisional.
3. The number of deaths registered in a week is affected when bank holidays occur.
4. The five-year average for each year is as follows: 2018 to 2019, and 2021 to 2023 for comparisons with 2024; 2017 to 2019, and 2021 to 2022 for comparisons with 2023.

3 . Deaths data

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

Dataset | Released 17 January 2024

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 the most up-to-date figures available for deaths involving coronavirus (COVID-19).

Try the new way to filter and download these data:

- [Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales by age and sex](#)
- [Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales by region](#)

4 . Glossary

Coronavirus deaths

Coronavirus (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.

Excess death

The term excess deaths in this statistical bulletin refers to the number of deaths above the five-year average. For 2020 and 2021, the average for 2015 to 2019 has been used. For 2022, the average is calculated from 2016 to 2019 and 2021 data. For 2023, the average is calculated from 2017 to 2019, 2021 and 2022 data. For 2024, the average is calculated from 2018 to 2019, and 2021 to 2023 data. This provides a comparison of the number of deaths expected in a usual (non-coronavirus pandemic) year.

5 . Measuring the data

We publish timely, provisional counts of death registrations in our [Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional dataset](#). These are presented:

- by sex
- by age group
- by place of death
- by selected cause of death
- for regions (within England)
- for Wales as a whole

To allow time for registration and processing, figures are published 12 days after the week ends. We also provide provisional updated totals for death occurrences based on the latest available death registrations. With each week's publication, we also update the data for previous weeks within our dataset, for both deaths registrations and occurrences.

The five-year average shows us the expected number of deaths per week based on the most recent years and smooths random year-on-year fluctuations. We use the 2015 to 2019 five-year average as a usual non-coronavirus (COVID-19) period to compare with. The further we move away from this period, the less robust the measure is because of changes in population numbers, age and structure.

Deaths registered in 2024 are compared with the 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022 and 2023 five-year average. The number of registration days in a reference period can affect mortality statistics. Bank holidays can affect the number of registrations because registration offices are closed.

Underlying cause of death versus contributory causes

In this release, we discuss both deaths “involving” a particular cause, and deaths “due to” a particular cause. Those “involving” a cause include all deaths that had the cause mentioned on the death certificate, whether as the underlying or a contributory cause. Deaths “due to” a particular cause refer to the underlying cause of death.

Data coverage

The number of weeks in the year will affect how many days the data cover in the year. Leap years require a 53rd week to be added to the end of the calendar year. The last leap year was in 2020. It is more appropriate to compare 2020 figures with the average for Week 52 than with a single year from five years previously. Read more on the data coverage for our Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional bulletin in [Section 1 of our Coronavirus and mortality in England and Wales methodology](#).

Registration delays

This bulletin is based mainly on the date that deaths are registered, not the date of death. In this bulletin, we consider deaths to be registered within the previous seven days, when the time between death occurrence and registration is between zero and six days. The number of days between death occurrence and registration depends on many factors and there might be longer delays sometimes, particularly if the death is referred to a coroner. Read more in our [Impact of registration delays on mortality statistics in England and Wales article](#).

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 (WHO) were used for deaths involving COVID-19. Read more in our [Coronavirus and mortality in England and Wales methodology](#).

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](#).

6 . Strengths and limitations

The weekly figures the Office for National Statistics (ONS) produces are for England and Wales only, and are from the formal death registration process. They are published each week, to provide users with timely data, and to capture seasonal trends. Data for Scotland and Northern Ireland are provided to us by [National Records of Scotland](#) and [Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency](#), respectively, to produce numbers and rates for the UK overall.

Quality

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

7 . Related links

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

Bulletin | Released 15 December 2023

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.

[Death registration summary statistics, England and Wales: 2022](#)

Article | Released 11 April 2023

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

[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. Includes breakdowns by age, sex and geography.

8 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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