

Statistical bulletin

National life tables – life expectancy in the UK: 2022 to 2024

Trends in period life expectancy, a measure of the average number of years people will live beyond their current age, analysed by age and sex for the UK and its constituent countries.

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1 . Main points

In 2022 to 2024:

- Life expectancy at birth in the UK was 83.0 years for females and 79.1 years for males; this is an increase of 18 weeks from 82.7 years for females and 21 weeks from 78.7 years for males since 2019 to 2021.
- Life expectancy at age 65 years in the UK was 21.2 years for females and 18.7 years for males; this is an increase of 17 weeks from 20.8 years for females and 21 weeks from 18.3 years for males since 2019 to 2021.
- For the UK, life expectancy at birth for females was at the same level that it was in 2017 to 2019, before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic; for males, it was still slightly below the 2017 to 2019 level.
- Life expectancy at birth returned to 2017 to 2019 levels for females in England and Northern Ireland, while it remained slightly lower for females in Scotland and Wales.
- For males, life expectancy at birth was below 2017 to 2019 levels in all UK countries, but by no more than 10 weeks (0.2 years).

Our national life tables are period life tables that reflect current mortality rates at each age. They do not give a true estimate of how long someone can expect to live on average, as this will be affected by improving or worsening mortality in the future. For more information, see [Section 6: Data sources and quality](#).

2 . Life expectancy at birth

Life expectancy in the UK has remained virtually unchanged for the last 10 years, following sustained increases in the preceding decades.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic led to increased mortality during 2020, 2021 and 2022. This resulted in a reduction in estimates of period life expectancy.

Nationally, life expectancy has been gradually returning to pre-pandemic levels in recent periods. However, some impact remained in the latest reporting period (2022 to 2024), particularly for males. Subnationally, there is significant variation in life expectancy. The latest estimates are provided in our [Life expectancy for local areas of the UK between 2001 to 2003 and 2002 to 2024](#).

Figure 1: Life expectancy at birth has been increasing in the UK following the decline caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

Life expectancy at birth for females and males, UK, between 1980 to 1982 and 2022 to 2024

Life expectancy at birth for UK females was 83.0 years in 2022 to 2024. This is an increase of 18 weeks from 82.7 years in 2019 to 2021, the most recent non-overlapping period. Male life expectancy at birth was 79.1 years, which is an increase of 21 weeks from 78.7 years in 2019 to 2021.

The gap between male and female life expectancy at birth fell from 6.0 years in 1980 to 1982 to 3.7 years in 2012 to 2014. Recently, there has been a slight widening to 3.9 years in 2022 to 2024.

Life expectancy at birth was 83.3 years for females and 79.4 years for males in the UK in 2024, as shown in our [Single year life tables dataset](#). This is the highest value for females but is still slightly lower for males than the peak in 2019. Single year life tables are volatile and a less robust indicator of mortality trends than three-year life tables. For more information, see [Section 6: Data sources and quality](#).

Mortality fell in 2024 across the UK, except for Northern Ireland, where it increased. In 2024, there were:

- 568,613 deaths in [England and Wales](#), which is 2.2% lower than in 2023
- 62,291 deaths in [Scotland](#), which is 1.8% lower than in 2023
- 18,050 deaths in [Northern Ireland](#), which is 4.6% higher than in 2023

Age-standardised mortality rates (ASMRs) account for the size and age structure of the population. They allow comparison of mortality rates over time. ASMRs in England and Wales, and Scotland reached their lowest recorded levels in 2024. The ASMRs (deaths per 100,000 people) in 2024 were:

- 797 for females and 1,094 for males in England and Wales
- 968 for females and 1,269 for males in Scotland
- 873 for females and 1,198 for males in Northern Ireland

The pandemic led to lower estimates of period life expectancy across all UK countries. We average mortality data over three-year periods to produce our National life tables. The impact on period life expectancy was more spread and less sharp than in annual mortality data or single year life tables. The lowest period life expectancy figures were recorded in 2020 to 2022 for all UK countries, and have risen for subsequent periods.

Figure 2: Life expectancy at birth has increased relatively slowly over the last 15 years across the UK countries

Life expectancy at birth, females and males, UK countries, between 2008 to 2010 and 2022 to 2024

Life expectancy at birth in 2022 to 2024 was:

- 83.3 years for females and 79.4 years for males in England
- 82.6 years for females and 78.8 years for males in Northern Ireland
- 82.2 years for females and 78.3 years for males in Wales
- 81.1 years for females and 77.1 years for males in Scotland

It is interesting to see how estimates for the latest period 2022 to 2024 compared with levels in 2017 to 2019, which was the last complete period before the start of the pandemic.

Figure 3: Life expectancy at birth for males was still lower for 2022 to 2024, compared with 2017 to 2019, across all countries

Change in life expectancy at birth in weeks, UK and constituent countries, between 2017 to 2019 and 2022 to 2024

Life expectancy at birth in 2022 to 2024 had largely returned to pre-pandemic levels for females at the national level. Scotland and Wales are slightly lower than the 2017 to 2019 levels by just three weeks and two weeks, respectively. England and Northern Ireland are slightly above the 2017 to 2019 levels by only one week and three weeks, respectively.

Life expectancy at birth in 2022 to 2024 was still below the pre-pandemic level for males in all nations. The largest differences were in England (10 weeks) and Wales (5 weeks).

3 . Life expectancy at older ages

Life expectancy at age 65 years was 21.2 years for females and 18.7 years for males in 2022 to 2024 in the UK. This is an increase of 17 weeks from 20.8 years for females and 21 weeks from 18.3 years for males since 2019 to 2021, the most recent non-overlapping period.

The estimated number of people aged 90 years and over in the UK rose to 625,000 in 2024, which is an increase of 53.7% since 2004. The number of centenarians has doubled in this time to 16,600 in 2024, as discussed in our [Estimates of the very old, including centenarians, UK: 2002 to 2024 bulletin](#). The changes in the older population are largely explained by improvements in life expectancy and historic birth patterns.

Life expectancy at age 65 years by sex was higher for all UK nations (except for Northern Ireland females), compared with the last complete period before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in 2017 to 2019. None of the differences are greater than nine weeks.

Figure 4: Life expectancy at age 65 years was generally slightly higher in 2022 to 2024 than in 2017 to 2019, across all countries

Change in life expectancy at age 65 years in weeks, UK and constituent countries, between 2017 to 2019 and 2022 to 2024

4 . Data on National life tables – life expectancy in the UK

[National life tables: England](#)

Dataset | Released 10 December 2025

Period life expectancy by age and sex for England. Each national life table is based on population estimates, births and deaths for a period of three consecutive years. Tables are published annually.

[National life tables: Wales](#)

Dataset | Released 10 December 2025

Period life expectancy by age and sex for Wales. Each national life table is based on population estimates, births and deaths for a period of three consecutive years. Tables are published annually.

[National life tables: Scotland](#)

Dataset | Released 10 December 2025

Period life expectancy by age and sex for Scotland. Each national life table is based on population estimates, births and deaths for a period of three consecutive years. Tables are published annually.

[National life tables: Northern Ireland](#)

Dataset | Released 10 December 2025

Period life expectancy by age and sex for Northern Ireland. Each national life table is based on population estimates, births and deaths for a period of three consecutive years. Tables are published annually.

[National life tables: UK](#)

Dataset | Released 10 December 2025

Period life expectancy by age and sex for the UK. Each national life table is based on population estimates, births and deaths for a period of three consecutive years. Tables are published annually.

View all data used in this statistical bulletin on the [related data page](#).

5 . Glossary

Life table

A life table is a demographic tool used to analyse death rates and calculate life expectancies at various ages. We calculate life tables separately for females and males because of their different mortality patterns.

Period life expectancy

The life expectancy estimates reported in this bulletin are period based. Period life expectancy at a given age for an area is the average number of additional years a person would live if he or she experienced the area's age-specific mortality rates for that time period, throughout the rest of their life.

6 . Data sources and quality

National life tables are period life tables and are based on three consecutive years of data. Data in this bulletin are based on 2022, 2023 and 2024. This reduces the effect of annual fluctuations in the number of deaths caused by either the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, or more commonly, by seasonal events, such as influenza.

Life expectancy is determined by changes in mortality rates across the lifespan. If mortality rates improve, average life expectancy will increase. The National life tables are period life tables that reflect current mortality rates at each age. They do not give a true estimate of how long someone can expect to live on average, as this will be affected by improving or worsening mortality in the future. Find out more about cohort life expectancy for the UK in our [Past and projected period and cohort life tables bulletin](#). You can calculate average cohort life expectancy for someone of your age and sex using our [Life expectancy calculator](#). We describe the two types of life expectancy, period and cohort, in our [Period and cohort life expectancy explained methodology](#).

Figures in the commentary in this bulletin are rounded to one decimal place. Calculations in this bulletin have been made using unrounded figures. Life expectancy estimates to two decimal places can be found in the datasets for this release.

Our National life tables use a complete life table methodology and should be used by anyone making national comparisons of life expectancy. Explanation of the methodology used to create the National life tables is available in our [Guide to calculating national life tables methodology](#).

We also publish subnational life expectancies, which use an abridged life table method. National life expectancy estimates are produced as part of our subnational [Life expectancy for local areas of the UK: between 2001 to 2003 and 2022 to 2024 bulletin](#). These will differ slightly to those published in the National life tables because of the different methodologies used. They are published to allow users to compare subnational and national life expectancies produced on the same basis. More information on our life expectancy releases and their uses can be found in our [Life Expectancy releases and their different uses article](#).

We have published our [Single year life tables datasets](#) alongside our three-year life tables. These have been published to meet user need for single-year data. Single year life tables are suited for analyses that require annual data and more detailed information about mortality patterns. They can give a more granular and up-to-date perspective on whether mortality patterns are improving, worsening, or staying the same than our three-year average life tables. Unlike three-year life tables, single year life tables are not accredited official statistics.

Single year life tables show figures that are typically more volatile than three-year average life tables. This is particularly the case recently, because of the mortality associated with the pandemic. This makes single year life tables a less robust indicator of mortality trends. For this reason, they should not be used alone to draw conclusions about longer-term trends. Additionally, smaller populations, such as the UK countries other than England, are more prone to short-term volatility because single events can have a large effect on an already small population.

More quality and methodology information (QMI) on strengths, limitations, appropriate uses, and how the data were created is available in our [National life tables QMI](#).

Accredited official statistics

These accredited official statistics were independently reviewed by the Office for Statistics Regulation in April 2011. They comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in [the Code of Practice for Statistics](#) and should be labelled "accredited official statistics".

7 . Related links

[Estimates of the very old, including centenarians, UK: 2002 to 2024](#)

Bulletin | Released 21 October 2025

Annual mid-year population estimates for people aged 90 years and over by sex and single year of age to 105 years and over, and comparisons between UK countries.

[Life expectancy for local areas of the UK: between 2001 to 2003 and 2022 to 2024](#)

Bulletin | Released 10 December 2025

Subnational trends in the average number of years people will live beyond their current age measured by "period life expectancy".

[Life expectancy in Scotland 2022 to 2024](#)

Bulletin | Published 10 December 2025

The latest statistics on life expectancy in Scotland, council areas, health boards and other areas.

[Past and projected data from the period and cohort life tables: 2022-based, UK, 1981 to 2072](#)

Bulletin | Released 14 February 2025

Life expectancy (e), probability of dying (q) and number of persons surviving (l) from the period and cohort life tables, using past and projected mortality data from the 2022-based national population projections (NPPs), for the UK and constituent countries.

[Life expectancy calculator](#)

Interactive tool | Released 14 February 2025

Use our interactive calculator to find out average life expectancy and the likelihood of living to be aged 100 years for someone of your age and sex.

[Deaths registered in England and Wales: 2024](#)

Bulletin | Released 9 October 2025

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.

8 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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