

STATISTICS PRESS NOTICE – Covid-19 related deaths in Northern Ireland: March 2020 - January 2021



9:30am Thursday 25th February 2021

Analysis of Covid-19 related deaths: March 2020 – January 2021

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) has today published an updated analysis of Covid-19 related deaths that occurred (based on the date of death) in Northern Ireland between 1st March 2020 and 31st January 2021.

The statistics show that Covid-19 related deaths (2,546) accounted for 15.8% of all deaths in Northern Ireland over the eleven-month period.

Age-standardised mortality rates (ASMRs) **are used to directly compare mortality rates for different groups, including males with females, or regions, using the age structure of a standard population.** The Covid-19 related ASMR for March 2020 to January 2021 was 160.0 deaths per 100,000 persons. Males had a significantly higher rate of death linked to Covid-19: the ASMR for males was 196.7 deaths per 100,000 of the male population compared with 133.5 deaths per 100,000 females.

Of the 2,546 Covid-19 related deaths to date, 1,468 (57.7%) occurred between November 2020 and January 2021 inclusive (3 out of the 11 months). Monthly Covid-19 ASMRs per 100,000 were highest in January 2021 (50.1 for males and 32.7 for females) and lowest in August 2020 (1.9 for males and 0.6 for females).

From March 2020 to January 2021, Antrim & Newtownabbey Local Government District (LGD) had the highest Covid-19 related ASMR with 204.0 deaths per 100,000.

Over the period, March 2020 – August 2020, which broadly represents wave one of the pandemic, Covid-19 related ASMRs were highest in Belfast LGD with 90.0 deaths per 100,000 while between September 2020 and January 2021, which would be considered as wave two, Derry City & Strabane LGD had the highest Covid-19 related ASMR with 142.1 deaths per 100,000.

Adjusting for differing age structures within the population, Covid-19 related ASMRs were highest for the 20% most deprived areas at 188.3 deaths per 100,000 population and lowest in the 20% least deprived areas at 137.5 deaths (per 100,000).

The highest Covid-19 related ASMR was found in urban areas (173.0 deaths per 100,000 population). This was significantly higher than ASMRs in areas categorised as rural (141.1 deaths per 100,000 population) and mixed urban/rural (139.5 deaths per 100,000 population).

Proportions of Covid-19 related deaths in Northern Ireland by country of birth are in line with proportions from the Northern Ireland 2011 Census and show that 88.9% of Covid-19 related deaths were of people born in Northern Ireland.

Of the 2,546 Covid-19 related deaths, 355 (13.9%) Covid-19 related deaths were persons of working age (aged 20-69), of which 74 (20.8%) and 53 (14.9%) had a reported occupation in the skilled trades and elementary occupations groups respectively.

NISRA

February 2021

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. Statistical report and detailed tables can be found at:
<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/covid-19-related-deaths-northern-ireland>
2. All media queries to Department of Finance Press Office at dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk or on Tel: 028 90816724. The Executive Information Service operates an out of hours service For Media Enquiries Only between 1800hrs and 0800hrs Monday to Friday and at weekends and public holidays. The duty press officer can be contacted on 028 9037 8110.
3. Differences between NISRA's death registration statistics and the daily totals reported via the Department of Health are as follows:
 - The **daily updates** provided by the Department of Health (DoH) count the number of deaths reported by Trusts, where the deceased had a positive test for Covid-19 and died within 28 days, whether or not Covid-19 was the cause of death. DoH figures will not capture all deaths that do not meet this definition. These data are important because they are available earlier, and therefore give a quicker indication of what is happening day by day and are broadly comparable with the figures released daily in other parts of the United Kingdom (UK). The DoH reported 1,867 deaths associated with Covid-19 by 31st January 2021 (including revisions up to 22nd February).
 - These statistics, like the NISRA weekly, provisional death statistics, are based on death registration information collected by the General Register Office, and count all deaths where Covid-19 was mentioned on the death certificate by the doctor who certified the death, whether or not Covid-19 was the primary underlying cause of death. The figures include cases where the doctor noted that there was suspected or probable coronavirus infection involved in the death. As a result totals from this source will usually be higher than the relevant daily figures - because the DoH daily updates only include those who have tested positive for the virus.
4. These occurrence based statistics (to end January 2021) take into account registrations up to and including 17th February 2021, to allow for delays in death registrations.
5. Mortality rates generally increase with age. A population with a greater proportion of older people is expected to have more deaths per population. To adjust for different age profiles in different populations (e.g. different regions or countries), statistical techniques are used to adjust or 'standardize' mortality rates among populations to be compared. **Age-standardised mortality rates (ASMRs)** are presented per 100,000 people and are standardised to the [2013 European Standard Population](#).
6. Further information on the statistics provided in this publication can be obtained from NISRA Customer Services at:

Telephone: +44 (0)300 200 7836 E-mail: demography@nisra.gov.uk

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