

STATISTICS PRESS NOTICE – SUICIDE STATISTICS IN NORTHERN IRELAND, 2002-2022



9:30am 13 December 2023

Suicide Statistics in Northern Ireland, 2002 – 2022

Figures published today by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) show that there were 203 suicide deaths registered in 2022. While this represents a decrease of 34 (14.3 per cent) from the 237 suicide deaths registered in 2021. It is important to note that annual fluctuations in registration-based figures build in procedural delays and the three-year rolling average of suicide deaths has remained relatively stable since 2017.

In 2022, 156 (76.8 per cent) suicide deaths were males and 47 (23.2 per cent) were females. The suicide death rate (standardised for age) for males decreased from 21.6 per 100,000 males in 2021 to 19.2 in 2022, while for females, the equivalent rate decreased from 7.2 per 100,000 females in 2021 to 5.7 in 2022.

The death rate per 100,000 population was higher for those suicide deaths in 2022 for people with a marital status of divorced (20.8) or single (17.7), compared to those recorded as widowed (11.4) or married (9.5).

Northern Ireland had an age-standardised rate of 12.3 suicides per 100,000 population in 2022. This was lower than the 13.9 suicides per 100,000 population for Scotland but higher than the 2021 rate for England and Wales of 10.7 suicides per 100,000. It should be noted that cross country comparisons will be affected by differences in data collection and collation processes in the separate jurisdictions.

The Belfast Trust had the highest number (51) of suicides in 2022. The South-Eastern Trust had the lowest number of suicides in 2022 at 34.

The percentage of suicides in 2022 from Northern Ireland's most deprived areas (31.0 per cent) was over three times that of the least deprived areas (9.4 per cent).

NISRA

December 2023

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. The official United Kingdom (UK) definition of suicide encompasses deaths due to external causes relating to intentional self-harm and of undetermined intent. It does not include deaths where the outcome was deemed accidental.
2. Statistics and background information on the processes involved in the production of suicide statistics can be found on the [NISRA website](#).
3. Suicide deaths are defined using the UK definition which includes deaths from self-inflicted Injury as well as events of undetermined Intent. The ICD-10 codes used to define the suicide figures include:
 - Persons aged 10 years and above; ICD-10 X60-X84 and Y87.0 (Self-inflicted Injury)
 - Persons aged 15 years and above; ICD-10 Y10-Y34 and Y87.2 (Events of undetermined intent)
4. In 2019 NISRA and the Coroners Service for Northern Ireland (CSNI) commenced a [review of suicide statistics](#), which concluded in 2022. This marked a major revision to this important statistical series and has had a significant impact on the existing Northern Ireland narrative in relation to suicide rates compared with other nations. Following the review a break in the time series has been introduced from 2015, meaning that comparisons with data pre-2015 should be made with caution.
5. Registration based statistics will always be subject to fluctuations in the time which lapses between the date of death and the date the Coroner is able to close the investigation. Every death reported is carefully considered by the Coroner and is influenced by several factors specific to each case. These

include whether the Coroner orders a post mortem, whether an inquest is required, the complexity of each case, and the number of cases reported to and being investigated by the Coroner at any point in time. It is therefore important to look at the trend over a longer period of time.

6. Information on the areas of deprivation is taken from the Northern Ireland Multiple deprivation measures (NIMDM 2017) and can be found at:
<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/deprivation/northern-ireland-multiple-deprivation-measure-2017-nimdm2017>

7. 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.

8. Further information on the statistics provided in this publication can be obtained from NISRA Customer Services at:
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