

Statistical bulletin

Quarterly suicide death registrations in England: 2001 to 2020 registrations and Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) to Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2021 provisional data

Provisional rate and number of suicide deaths registered in England per quarter. Includes 2001 to 2020 registrations and provisional data for Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) to Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2021.

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1 . Main points

- Provisional analysis shows there were 10.1 suicide deaths per 100,000 people in Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2021 in England, which is equivalent to 1,265 deaths registered; this rate is similar to the rates seen in the third quarter of previous years.
- In the provisional Quarter 3 2021 data, there were 15.8 suicide deaths per 100,000 males (971 deaths registered) and 4.6 suicide deaths per 100,000 females (294 deaths registered).
- Rates observed in Quarter 3 2021 for men and women are generally consistent with those observed in Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) and Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2021 and Quarter 3 of previous years.
- In Quarter 3 2021, London had the lowest suicide rate of any region of England (6.2 deaths per 100,000), while the highest rate was in the North East with 14.8 deaths per 100,000.
- For suicides, the median registration delay in Quarter 3 decreased from 173 days in 2020 to 169 days in 2021.

If you are a journalist covering a suicide-related issue, please consider following the [Samaritans' media guidelines on the reporting of suicide](#) because of the potentially damaging consequences of irresponsible reporting. In particular, the guidelines advise on terminology and include links to sources of support for anyone affected by the themes in the article.

If you are struggling to cope, please call Samaritans for free on 116 123 (UK and the Republic of Ireland) or contact other sources of support, such as those listed on the [NHS help for suicidal thoughts](#) webpage. Support is available round the clock, every single day of the year, providing a safe place for anyone struggling to cope, whoever they are, however they feel, whatever life has done to them.

2 . Quarterly suicides

Around a third of the suicides registered so far in 2021 had a date of death that was also in 2021

The data reported in this release cannot be used to show the number of suicides with a date of death in 2021. See [deaths from suicide that occurred in England and Wales between April and July 2020](#) for further information on suicide during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Of the 3,826 suicides registered in England between January and September 2021, around a third had a date of death that was also in 2021 (1,264 deaths or 33.0%). This is in line with expectation considering the coroner involvement with the investigation of these deaths, and the amount of time it takes to hold an inquest.

All deaths caused by suicide in England are investigated by coroners. Given the length of time it takes to hold an inquest, most deaths are registered around five to six months after they occurred.

Looking at Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) 2021, 3.2% of the 1,274 suicides registered in this period had a date of death in the same period (41 deaths), with the remaining deaths (96.8%) occurring before 2021. This is in line with the figures seen in previous years.

For Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2021, 2.7% of the 1,287 suicides registered in this period occurred in the same period (35 deaths), with the remaining deaths occurring in Quarter 1 2021 (29.1%) or earlier (68.1%).

For Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2021, 3.3% of the 1,265 suicides registered in this period occurred in the same period (42 deaths), with the remaining deaths occurring in Quarter 1 2021 (28.9%), Quarter 2 2021 (32.1%) or earlier (35.7%).

Table 1: Quarterly registered number and percentage of suicides by date of occurrence, England, provisional 2021 registrations

Quarter of occurrence 2021

		Prior to 2021	Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021	Total registered
	Q1	1,233 (96.8%)	41 (3.2%)	-	-	1,274
Quarter of registration 2021	Q2	877 (68.1%)	375 (29.1%)	35 (2.7%)	-	1,287
	Q3	452 (35.7%)	365 (28.9%)	406 (32.1%)	42 (3.3%)	1,265
Occurred	Total	2,562	781	441	42	

Source: Office for National Statistics - Quarterly suicide death registrations in England

Notes

1. 2021 registration data are provisional.
2. The National Statistics definition of suicide is given in Section 4: Glossary.
3. Figures are for persons aged 10 years and over.
4. Figures for England exclude deaths of non-residents; geographical boundaries are based on the most up-to-date information available at the time of publication.

3 . Quarterly suicide data

[Deaths caused by suicide by quarter in England](#)

Dataset | Released 8 December 2021

Provisional rate and number of suicide deaths registered in England per quarter. Includes 2001 to 2020 registrations and provisional data for Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) to Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2021.

4 . Glossary

Suicide

This release is based on the National Statistics' definition of suicide. This definition includes all deaths from intentional self-harm for persons aged 10 years and over. It also includes deaths where the intent was undetermined for those aged 15 years and over. For further information on the definition used, please see our [Suicides in England and Wales Statistical bulletins](#).

Year of registration

Figures are based on deaths registered in each calendar year, rather than the date on which the death occurred.

Registration delay

The registration delay refers to the time lag between the date of death (that is, when the death occurred) and the date the death was registered. For further information on the impact of registration delays, see Section 7 of the [Suicide rates in the UK Quality and Methodology Information \(QMI\)](#).

Age-standardised mortality rate

Age-standardised mortality rate in this bulletin refers to a weighted average of the age-specific mortality rates per 100,000 people, and is standardised to the 2013 European Standard Population. They allow for differences in the age structure of populations and therefore allow valid comparisons to be made between geographic areas, the sexes and over time. For more information see Section 8 of the [Suicide rates in the UK Quality and Methodology Information \(QMI\)](#).

Statistical significance

The term "significant" refers to changes or differences based on unrounded figures. You can [find out more about statistical significance in our methodology](#). Significance has been determined using the 95%, where instances of non-overlapping [confidence intervals](#) between figures indicate the difference is unlikely to have arisen from random fluctuation. For more information, see Section 8 of the [Suicide rates in the UK QMI](#).

5 . Measuring the data

Figures are for deaths registered, rather than deaths occurring in each quarter. For deaths caused by suicide, around half of the deaths registered each year will have occurred in the previous year or earlier because of the length of time it takes to hold a coroner's inquest.

Further information on registration delays and their impact can be found in the [Suicide rates in the UK Quality and Methodology Information \(QMI\)](#).

Quarterly age-standardised rates

Calculation of mortality rates for quarterly deaths requires adjustments to be made to annual population estimates in order to calculate rates that are comparable with annual rates. Further information is detailed in the [accompanying datasets](#).

More quality and methodology information on strengths, limitations, appropriate uses, and how the data were created is available in the [Suicide rates in the UK Quality and Methodology Information](#).

6 . Strengths and limitations

This release aims to monitor suicide death registrations in England, based on the best available provisional data.

Quarterly data for 2021 are provisional and may be subject to changes once annual death registrations are complete. Data for 2021 will be finalised in the annual [Suicides in the UK](#) release in 2022.

Quarterly age-standardised rates are included to aid interpretation, such as whether changes by quarter in a given registration year are statistically meaningful. This is especially important when interpreting low numbers of deaths, which are prone to random fluctuation and volatility over time.

Our [Suicide rates in the UK Quality and Methodology Information](#) (QMI) contains further detail on the strengths and limitations of suicide registration figures.

7 . Related links

[Suicides in England and Wales: 2020 registrations](#)

Bulletin | Released 7 September 2021

Registered deaths in England and Wales from suicide analysed by sex, age, area of usual residence of the deceased, and suicide method.