

Deaths involving coronavirus (COVID-19) in Scotland

Week 53
(28 December 2020 to 03 January 2021)



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This statistical report includes provisional statistics on the number of deaths associated with coronavirus (COVID-19) and the total number of deaths registered in Scotland, for weeks 1 to 53 of 2020

Data for weeks 52 and 53 are affected by the Christmas Period

There were fewer registrations than usual in these weeks due to public holidays. Week 52 contained one public holiday for 25 December, and week 53 contained two public holidays, 28 December and 1 January.

Death registrations are therefore likely to be lower than the actual numbers of deaths that occurred in these weeks and do not provide a reliable indication of the trend. We expect to see an increase in registrations in the coming weeks as registrars deal with any backlogs.

Key Findings

COVID deaths

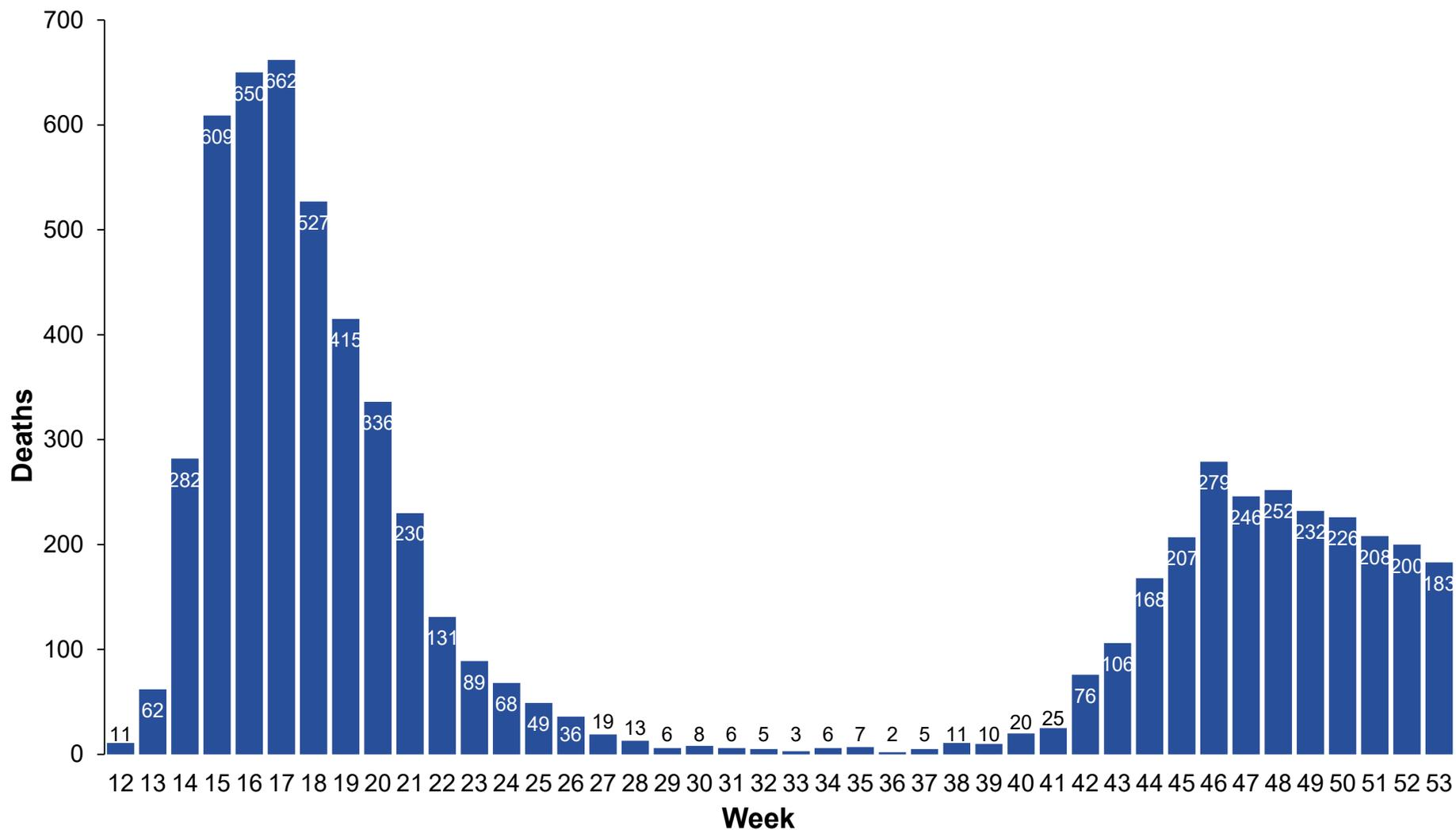
- As at the 3rd January, there have been a total of 6,686 deaths registered in Scotland where the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) was mentioned on the death certificate.
- Of the total number of deaths registered in week 53 (28 December to 03 January), there were 183 where COVID-19 was mentioned on the death certificate. The equivalent number of deaths for week 52 (21 December to 27 December) was 200.
- Of deaths involving COVID-19 in the latest week:
 - 75% (138 deaths) were aged 75+, and 8% (14 deaths) were aged under 65.
 - 47% were male (86 deaths) and 53% female (97 deaths).
 - There were 41 deaths in Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board area, 32 in Lothian and 28 in Lanarkshire.
 - At council level, the highest number of deaths occurred in City of Edinburgh (24), Glasgow City (21) and Fife (16).
 - The majority (61%) occurred in hospitals (111 deaths), with 63 deaths in care homes and 9 at home or in non-institutional settings.

All-cause deaths and excess deaths

- The provisional total number of deaths registered in Scotland in week 53 of 2020 (28 December to 03 January) was 1,156.
- The average number of deaths registered in the corresponding week over the previous five years was 1,018, so there were 138 (14%) more deaths registered in week 53 of 2020 compared to the average.

- Figures for week 52 (21 December to 27 December) showed a similar proportion of excess deaths (1,205 deaths compared to an average of 1,061, representing 14% above average).
- In week 53 there were 11 excess deaths in care homes compared to the average (5% above average), 112 excess deaths at home or in non-institutional settings (43% above average) and 17 excess deaths in hospitals compared to the average (3% above average).
- There were 138 excess deaths across all settings in the latest week. The number of deaths where COVID-19 was the underlying cause (150) was higher than the total number of excess deaths because deaths from respiratory causes (-52), dementia/Alzheimer's (-24) and circulatory causes (-12) were lower than the average for this time of year.

Figure 1: Weekly deaths involving COVID-19 in Scotland, week 12 to week 53



How do NRS compile these statistics?

- Weekly figures are based on the date of registration. In Scotland deaths must be registered within 8 days but in practice, the average time between death and registration is around 3 days.
- Figures are allocated to weeks based on the ISO8601 standard. Weeks begin on a Monday and end on a Sunday. Often weeks at the beginning and end of a year will overlap the preceding and following years (e.g. week 1 of 2020 began on Monday 30 December 2019) so the weekly figures may not sum to any annual totals which are subsequently produced.
- Deaths involving COVID-19 are defined as those where COVID-19 is mentioned on the death certificate, either as the underlying cause of death or as a contributory cause. Cause of death is coded according to the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Conditions 10th Revision (ICD-10). The relevant codes included in this publication are U07.1 and U07.2.
- Figures include deaths where 'suspected' or 'probable' COVID-19 appears on the death certificate.
- Data are provisional and subject to change in future weekly publications. The data will be finalised in June 2021. Reasons why the data might be revised later include late registration data being received once the week's figure have been produced or more information being provided by a certifying doctor or The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) on the cause of death.
- Certain user enquiries for ad-hoc analysis related to COVID-19 deaths have been published on our [website](#).
- The weekly publication includes breakdowns by sex, age, health board, local authority and location of death. It also includes an analysis of excess deaths by location and broad cause of death. We also publish a comprehensive and detailed analysis of mortality on a monthly basis.
- NRS mortality data (COVID-19 and excess deaths) continue to be made available on a weekly basis through the [Scottish Government's COVID-19 dashboard](#)

Index of available analysis on registered deaths involving COVID-19

Breakdown	Frequency	When Added	Latest Period Covered	Date Last updated
Age group	Weekly	8 th April 2020	Week 53	7 th January 2021
Sex	Weekly	8 th April 2020	Week 53	7 th January 2021
Location	Weekly	15 th April 2020	Week 53	7 th January 2021
Health Board	Weekly	8 th April 2020	Week 53	7 th January 2021
Local Authority	Weekly	22 nd April 2020	Week 53	7 th January 2021
Excess deaths by cause	Weekly	22 nd April 2020	Week 53	7 th January 2021
Excess deaths by cause and location	Weekly	17 th June 2020	Week 53	7 th January 2021
Age-standardised mortality rates – Scotland	Monthly	13 th May 2020	November	16 th December 2020
Age-standardised mortality rates – sub-Scotland	Monthly	17 th June 2020	March – Nov combined	16 th December 2020
Leading causes of death	Monthly	13 th May 2020	November	16 th December 2020
Pre-existing conditions	Monthly	13 th May 2020	November	16 th December 2020
Deprivation	Monthly	13 th May 2020	March – Nov combined	16 th December 2020
Urban Rural	Monthly	13 th May 2020	March – Nov combined	16 th December 2020
Daily occurrences by location of death	Monthly	13 th May 2020	November	16 th December 2020
Occupation	Monthly	17 th June 2020	March – Nov combined	16 th December 2020
Intermediate Zone	Monthly	17 th June 2020	March – Nov combined	16 th December 2020
Ethnic Group	One-off	8 th July 2020	March to mid-June	11 th November 2020

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Recording the present – At our network of local offices, we register births, marriages, civil partnerships, deaths, divorces and adoptions in Scotland.

Informing the future – We are responsible for the Census of Population in Scotland which we use, with other sources of information, to produce statistics on the population and households.

You can get other detailed statistics that we have produced from the Statistics section of our website. Scottish Census statistics are available on the Scotland’s Census website.

We also provide information about future publications on our website. If you would like us to tell you about future statistical publications, you can register your interest on the Scottish Government ScotStat website.

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Enquiries and suggestions

Please get in touch if you need any further information, or have any suggestions for improvement.

For media enquiries, please contact communications@nrscotland.gov.uk

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