

# Deaths Registered in Northern Ireland

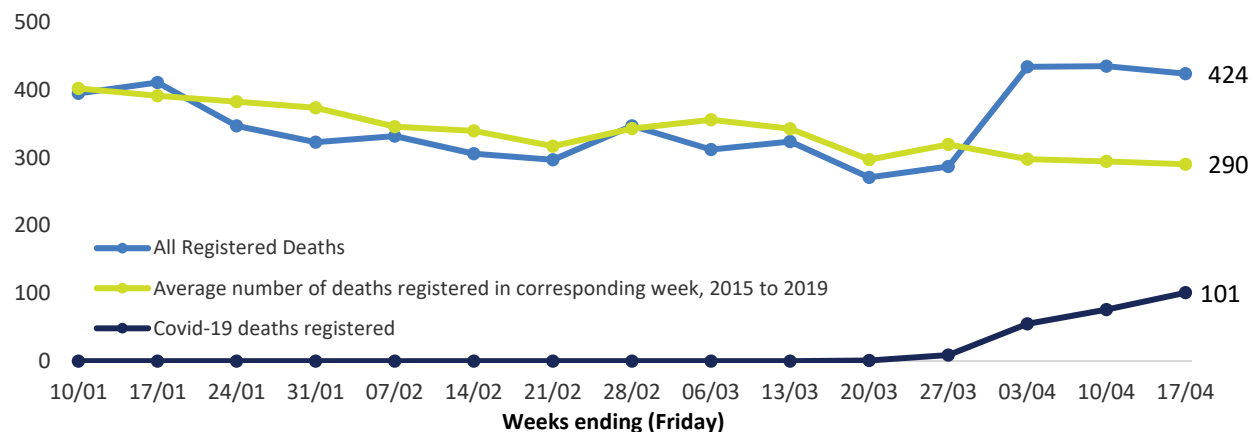
## Weekly Statistics

Week ending 17<sup>th</sup> April 2020 (Week 15)

Provisional statistics

For the third consecutive week, there were more deaths registered in Northern Ireland in week 15 than there have typically been in the same week in recent years. Of the 276 COVID-19 related deaths which have occurred in 2020 (up to 17<sup>th</sup> April), 93 (34%) took place in care homes. In the week ending 17<sup>th</sup> April, more COVID-19 related deaths occurred in a community setting than in hospitals (see page 2).

Figure 1: Weekly number of deaths registered in Northern Ireland



### Key Points – Analyses based on date of registration

- The provisional number of deaths registered\* in Northern Ireland in the week ending 17<sup>th</sup> April 2020 (week 15) was 424; 11 fewer than in week 14 but 134 more than the 5-year average of 290. Over the last 3 weeks, 410 ‘excess deaths’ (i.e. deaths above the average for the corresponding week in previous years) have been registered in Northern Ireland.
- Over two-fifths (42.2%) of all deaths in week 15 were classified as ‘respiratory’ (179). Please note that all COVID-19 related deaths have been included in this classification.
- There have been 5,245 deaths registered in the year-to-date, 30.3% of which (1,589) were classified as ‘respiratory’. The number and proportion of respiratory deaths is lower in the year-to-date than the 5-year average of 1,613 and 31.7% (Table 2 below).
- One hundred and one deaths mentioning COVID-19 on the death certificate were registered in week 15, accounting for 23.8% of all deaths in that week and bringing the total number of COVID-19 related deaths registered in calendar year 2020 to 242.
- Males accounted for around half (49.0%) of registered deaths in the calendar year 2020 to 17 April and slightly more than half (54.1%) of the 242 COVID-19 related deaths registered over the same period.
- The majority of all deaths registered in week 15 and the year-to-date were of persons aged 75 and above. This age group accounted for two-thirds of all deaths and almost 75% of COVID-19 related deaths in the year to date up to 17<sup>th</sup> April.

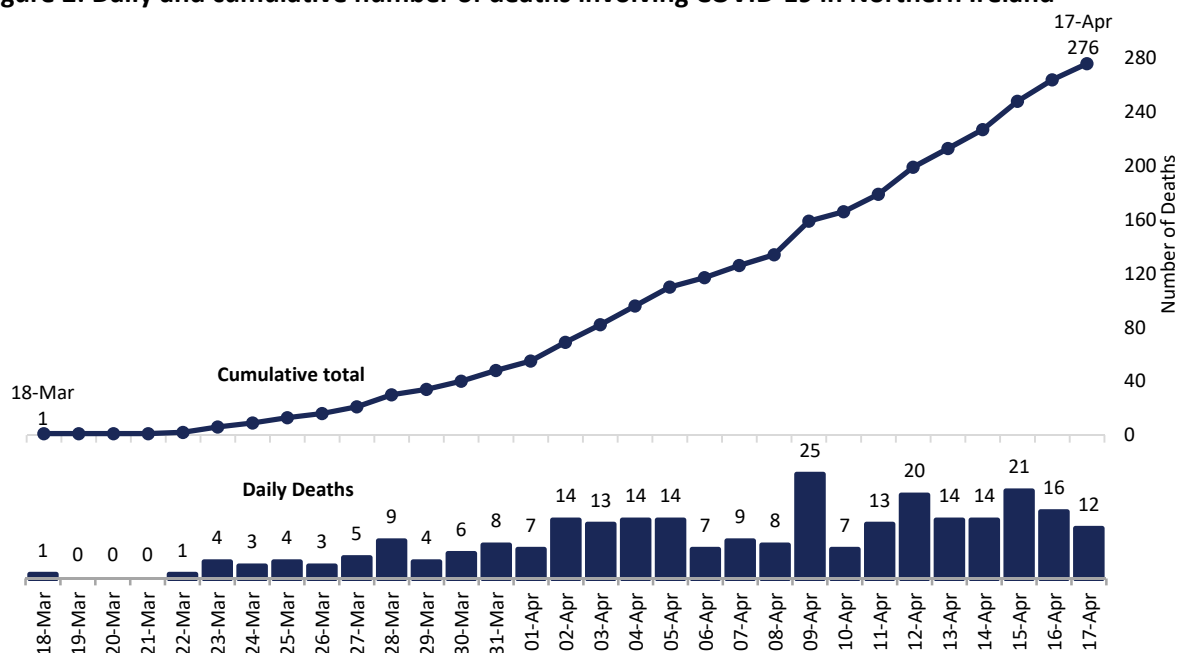
## COVID-19 deaths based on date of death

Because of the rapidly changing situation, this section of the bulletin provides provisional, updated totals of COVID-19 deaths occurring (based on the date of death) up to 17<sup>th</sup> April, taking account of the latest available death registrations up to and including 22 April 2020.

Overall, 276 COVID-19 related deaths had occurred in Northern Ireland by 17<sup>th</sup> April.

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> April saw the greatest number of COVID-19 deaths (25) occurring in a single day.

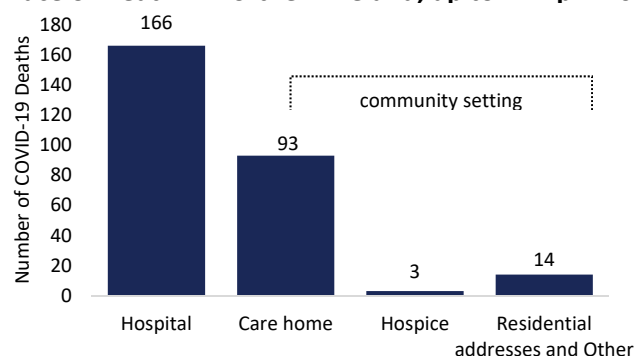
Figure 2: Daily and cumulative number of deaths involving COVID-19 in Northern Ireland



### Key Points – Analyses of COVID-19 deaths based on date of death<sup>1</sup>

- 276 deaths mentioning COVID-19 on the death certificate have occurred in total up to 17<sup>th</sup> April (including those registered up to and including 22<sup>nd</sup> April.)
- The comparative number of death notifications reported by the Public Health Agency (PHA)<sup>2</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> April<sup>2</sup> was 212 (see page 4 for definitional explanations).
- Of the 276 total deaths involving COVID-19 occurring up to 17<sup>th</sup> April, 166 (60.1%) occurred in hospital<sup>3</sup>, 93 (33.7%) occurred in care homes, three (1.1%) occurred in hospices and 14 (5.1%) occurred at residential addresses or another location (Fig. 3). The proportion of all COVID-19 deaths occurring in care homes has therefore increased from 25.3%<sup>4</sup> by the end of week 14 to 33.7% in the year to date up to 17<sup>th</sup> April.
- The 96 deaths in care homes and hospices involved 44 separate establishments.<sup>4</sup>
- In week 15, similar numbers of COVID-19 related deaths occurred in a community setting (56 in total) and in hospitals (54).

Figure 3: Number of deaths occurring involving COVID-19, by Place of Death in Northern Ireland, up to 17 April 2020



<sup>1</sup> The majority of deaths are registered within five days in NI; data based on date of death are subject to ongoing change.

<sup>2</sup> Responsibility for reporting these figures moved to the Department of Health on 19<sup>th</sup> April. Figures are based on deaths that occurred up to 17<sup>th</sup> April and include revisions up to 22<sup>nd</sup> April, to account for delayed notifications.

<sup>3</sup> Note: To aid comparison, the most recent Registrar General Annual Report notes that in 2018, 48% of all deaths occurred in hospital and 33% in nursing homes: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/registrar-general-annual-report-2018-deaths>

<sup>4</sup> Based on revised data since last week following additional death registrations.

<sup>5</sup> There are 490 care homes and hospices in Northern Ireland.

## Background

Deaths occurring in Northern Ireland are registered on the NI General Register Office's Registration System (NIROS). Daily extracts of registration records from NIROS are processed by the NISRA Vital Statistics Unit. Provisional data on deaths registered in each week (ending on a Friday) are compiled at the end of the following week\*.

Cause of death coding to the [ICD-10 classification](#) is carried out by ONS on NISRA's behalf on a quarterly basis. This means that quarterly statistics are the first output to report deaths according to underlying cause. These statistics are currently available up to [Quarter 1 2019](#); Quarter 2 2019 statistics are due to be published on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

To meet user needs, NISRA publish timely but provisional counts of death registrations in Northern Ireland in the weekly deaths provisional dataset. Weekly totals are presented alongside a 5-year weekly average as well as the lowest and highest number of deaths for the same week over the last five years. To allow time for registration and processing, these figures are published 7 days after the week ends.

Because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, from 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020 the NISRA weekly deaths release has been supplemented with the numbers of respiratory deaths (respiratory deaths include any death where Pneumonia, Bronchitis, Bronchiolitis or Influenza are mentioned on the death certificate); and deaths relating to COVID-19 (that is, where COVID-19 or suspected COVID-19 was mentioned anywhere on the death certificate, including in combination with other health conditions).

This bulletin will continue to be developed and more detail may be presented over the coming weeks.

This is a National Statistics publication.

National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#). They are produced free from any political interference.

The UK Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs
- are well explained and readily accessible
- are produced according to sound methods
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

## Differences between NISRA's death registration statistics and the Public Health Agency's (PHA) daily surveillance statistics

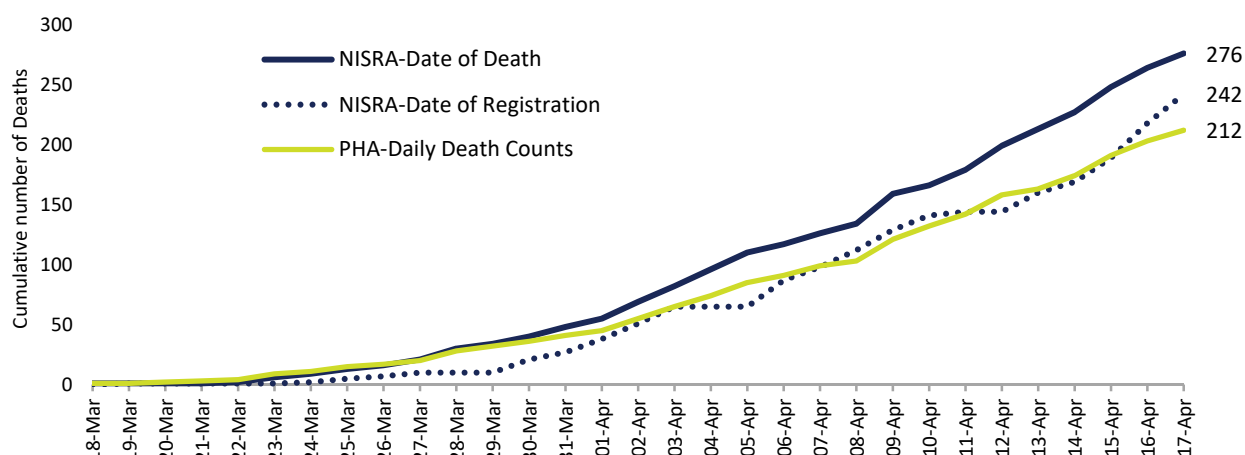
- The **daily Northern Ireland Government updates** (PHA's COVID-19 Surveillance Bulletin) provided by the Public Health Agency (PHA) count the number of deaths reported to the PHA where the deceased had a positive test for COVID-19 and died within 28 days, whether or not COVID-19 was the cause of death. PHA figures may not capture all deaths that occur outside hospital. 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 UK. **PHA reported 212 deaths associated with COVID-19 by 17<sup>th</sup> April 2020. This figure includes revisions up to 22<sup>nd</sup> April to account for delayed notifications.** Responsibility for reporting the daily updates moved to the Department of Health on 19<sup>th</sup> April.
- NISRA weekly provisional death statistics, which are based on death registration information collected by the General Register Office, 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 the weekly totals will usually be higher than the relevant daily figures - because the PHA daily updates only include those who have tested positive for the virus. The NISRA figures also include all deaths that occur outside hospital. They are comparable with weekly statistics produced by the Office for National Statistics and National Records Scotland. **NISRA figures published today show the total number of COVID-19 related deaths registered by 17<sup>th</sup> April 2020 was 242.** Deaths statistics based on date of registration will be subject to only minimal change.
- However, by analysing the registration based data using the **date the death occurred** (rather than the date of subsequent registration with the General Register Office), the statistics show that **276 deaths associated with COVID-19 had occurred by 17<sup>th</sup> April**. This figure is based on deaths registered up to and including 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020. This is the most appropriate figure to use to understand additional deaths beyond those reported via the daily surveillance reports. However it is also subject to ongoing change as not all deaths which occurred by 17<sup>th</sup> April will have been registered at the time of publishing these statistics.

**Figure 4 below graphically demonstrates the cumulative number of deaths involving COVID-19 in Northern Ireland using different data sources up to 17<sup>th</sup> April 2020.**

\* Bank Holidays could affect the number of registrations made within those weeks.

**The latest NISRA figures show that, by 17<sup>th</sup> April 2020, 276 deaths had occurred involving COVID-19, based on registrations up to 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020. PHA figures available for the same period show a total of 212 deaths.**

**Figure 4: Cumulative number of deaths involving COVID-19 in Northern Ireland using different data sources up to 17 April 2020<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup>Responsibility for reporting daily figures moved from the PHA to the Department of Health on 19<sup>th</sup> April. These figures are based on deaths that occurred up to 17<sup>th</sup> April and include revisions up to 22<sup>nd</sup> April, to account for delayed notifications.

## Latest death registration statistics

Table 1 shows that the provisional number of deaths registered in Northern Ireland in the week ending 17<sup>th</sup> April 2020 (week 15) was 424; 11 fewer (-2.5%) than in week 14 but 134 more (+46.2%) than the 5-year average of 290.

Over the last three weeks, 410 'excess deaths' (deaths above the average for the corresponding week in previous years) have been registered in Northern Ireland, 232 (56.6%) of which were COVID-19 related death registrations.

In terms of the year-to-date figures (weeks 1 to 15), the total number of deaths registered (5,245) is currently slightly higher (+3.0%) than the 5-year average (5,094).

**Table 1: Deaths registered<sup>1</sup> weekly in Northern Ireland, 2020<sup>P</sup>**

Registration week	Week ending (Friday)	2020 <sup>P</sup>	Previous 5 Years: 2015 - 2019 <sup>P</sup>		
		Total number of deaths registered in week	Average number of deaths registered in corresponding week	Range	
				Minimum	Maximum
12	27/03/2020	287	320	306	356
13	03/04/2020	434	298	280	323
14	10/04/2020	435	295	221	350
15	17/04/2020	424	290	270	316
<b>Year-to-date (week 1-15) Total</b>		<b>5,245</b>	<b>5,094</b>		

Note: Statistics for the full year are available in the accompanying spread sheet.

<sup>P</sup> Weekly published data are provisional.

<sup>1</sup> These data are based on registration dates of deaths, not occurrences. It can take up to five days for a death to be registered in Northern Ireland.

Table 2 shows that the number of death registrations mentioning COVID-19 on the death certificate, increased week by week, from 1 in week 11 to 101 in week 15 (242 in total).

In week 15, 42.2% of all deaths registered mentioned terms relating directly to respiratory causes on the death certificate. These are counted as 'respiratory' deaths in the table below and are provided to aid comparison with the COVID-19 statistics (COVID-19 deaths are also included in the respiratory category).

There have been 1,589 respiratory deaths registered in the year-to-date; this equates to 30.3% of all deaths so far in 2020. The number and proportion of respiratory deaths is lower in the year-to-date than the 5-year average (1,613, 31.7%).

**Table 2: COVID-19 and respiratory deaths registered<sup>1</sup> weekly in Northern Ireland, 2020<sup>P</sup>**

Registration week	Week ending (Friday)	2020 <sup>P</sup>				Previous 5 Years: 2015 - 2019 <sup>P</sup>	
		Total number of deaths registered in week	COVID-19 <sup>2</sup> deaths registered in week	Respiratory <sup>3</sup> deaths registered in week (2020 <sup>P</sup> )		Average number of respiratory deaths registered in corresponding week	
				N	%	N	%
11	20/03/2020	271	1	84	31.0%	95	32.0%
12	27/03/2020	287	9	77	26.8%	98	30.7%
13	03/04/2020	434	55	129	29.7%	91	30.4%
14	10/04/2020	435	76	162	37.2%	87	29.5%
15	17/04/2020	424	101	179	42.2%	81	28.0%
<b>Year-to-date (week 1-15) Total</b>		<b>5,245</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>1,589</b>	<b>30.3%</b>	<b>1,613</b>	<b>31.7%</b>

Note: Statistics for the full year are available in the accompanying spread sheet.

<sup>P</sup> Weekly published data are provisional.

<sup>1</sup> These data are based on registrations of deaths, not occurrences. It can take up to five days for a death to be registered in Northern Ireland.

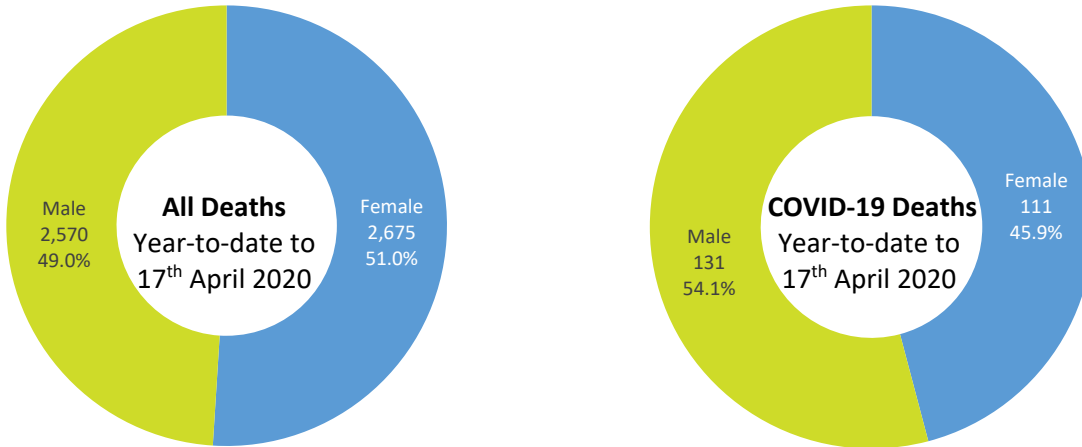
<sup>2</sup> COVID-19 deaths include any death where Coronavirus or COVID-19 (suspected or confirmed) was mentioned anywhere on the death certificate.

<sup>3</sup> Respiratory deaths include any death where terms directly relating to respiratory causes were mentioned anywhere on the death certificate (this includes COVID-19 deaths). This is not directly comparable to the ONS figures relating to 'deaths where the underlying cause was respiratory disease'.

## Deaths registered by sex

In the calendar year to 17<sup>th</sup> April 2020, males and females accounted for a similar proportion of all deaths registered (males: 49.0%, females: 51.0%). Specifically in terms of the COVID-19 deaths registered, males accounted for slightly more than half (54.1%) of the 242 deaths registered in the year-to-date.

Figure 5: All deaths and COVID-19 deaths registered by sex, year-to-date 2020



## Deaths registered by age-group

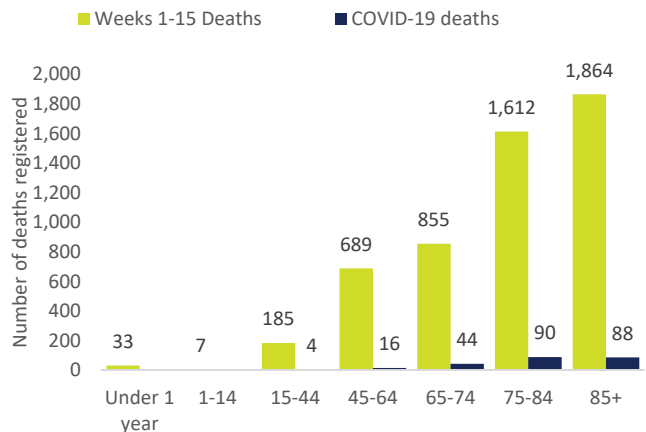
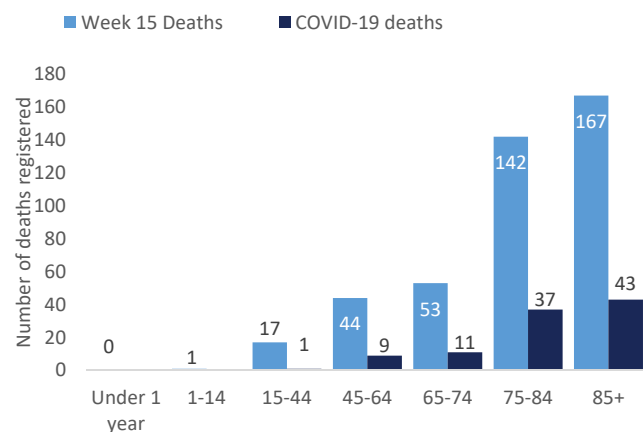
The majority of deaths registered in week 15 and the year-to-date were of persons aged 75 and above, with this age-group accounting for around two-thirds of all deaths and almost 75% of COVID-19 related deaths.

The 80 COVID-19 related deaths registered among those aged 75+ in week 15 equated to 25.9% of all deaths registered for this age-group during the week, while the 20 COVID-19 related deaths registered among those aged 45-74 equated to 20.6% of all deaths for this age-group.

**Almost three-quarters (72.8%) of all registered deaths in Northern Ireland in week 15 were aged 75 years and over. In the year to date to 17<sup>th</sup> April this age group accounted for two-thirds of all registered deaths.**

Figure 6: Deaths by age-group, week 15 2020

Deaths by age-group, year-to-date 2020



## Links to relevant publications

Deaths registered weekly in England & Wales

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths>

Weekly Data on Deaths Registered in Scotland

<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/vital-events/general-publications/weekly-and-monthly-data-on-births-and-deaths-registered-in-scotland>

Vital statistics (Central Statistics Office, Ireland)

<https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/birthsdeathsandmarriages/>

Northern Ireland PHA COVID-19 Surveillance Bulletin

<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/covid-19-surveillance-reports>

Number of coronavirus (COVID-19) cases and risk in the UK

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

COVID-19 Health Surveillance Monitor (Ireland)

<https://www.gov.ie/en/service/0039bc-view-the-covid-19-coronavirus-dashboard-showing-the-latest-stats-and/>

## List of Tables

Data accompanying this bulletin are available from the [NISRA website](#) in CSV and Excel format. The spread sheet includes the following tables.

Table 1: Deaths registered each week in Northern Ireland, 2020

Table 2: Deaths registered each week in Northern Ireland, by age-group and sex, 2020

Table 3: Covid-19 deaths registered each week in Northern Ireland, by age-group and sex, 2020

Table 4: Covid-19 Deaths by date of death each week in Northern Ireland, 2020

Table 5: Covid-19 Deaths by date of death each week in Northern Ireland, by Place of death, 2020

## Contact Details

We welcome feedback from users, please contact

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