



Alcohol-related deaths in the United Kingdom

1991-2008

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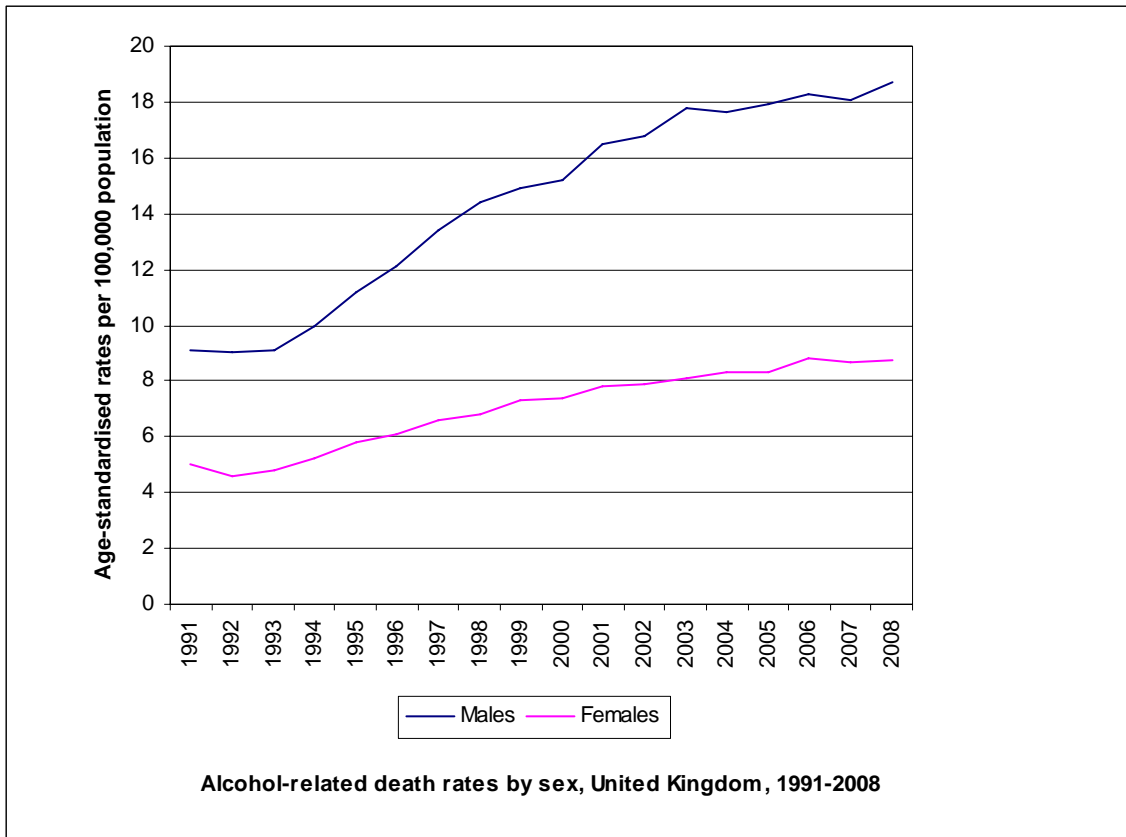
Coverage: United Kingdom **Theme:** Health

- In 2008, there were 9,031 alcohol-related deaths in the United Kingdom. The number increased from 8,724 in 2007.
- Rates have doubled since the early 1990s, from 6.7 per 100,000 population in 1992 to 13.6 per 100,000 in 2008.
- There are more alcohol-related deaths in males than females. In 2008, there were 18.7 per 100,000 in men and 8.7 per 100,000 in women.

United Kingdom

The number of alcohol-related deaths in the United Kingdom has consistently increased since the early 1990s, rising from the lowest figure of 4,023 (6.7 per 100,000) in 1992 to the highest of 9,031 (13.6 per 100,000) in 2008. Although figures in recent years suggested that the trend was levelling out, alcohol-related deaths in males increased further in 2008. Female rates have remained stable.

There are more alcohol-related deaths in men than in women. The rate of male deaths has more than doubled over the period from 9.1 per 100,000 in 1991 to 18.7 per 100,000 in 2008. There have been steadier increases in female rates, rising from 5.0 per 100,000 in 1991 to 8.7 in 2008, less than half the rate for males. In 2008, males accounted for approximately two-thirds of the total number of alcohol-related deaths. There were 5,999 deaths in men and 3,032 in women.



The trends differ according to age. For both males and females, the lowest rates across the period were in those aged 15-34. In 2008, the rates were 2.9 per 100,000 and 1.3 per 100,000 respectively. The highest rates have occurred in persons aged 55-74. In men, the rate has increased from 23.0 per 100,000 in 1992 and 1993 to 45.8 per 100,000 in 2008, the highest rate recorded across all age groups. Alcohol-related deaths in all age groups increased in 2008 compared with figures in 2007.

Alcohol-related death rates among females have been consistently lower than rates for males and trends demonstrate a broadly similar pattern across different age groups. As for men, the highest rates for women during the 1991-2008 period were in those aged 55-74. In 2008, the rate for this group peaked at 21.5 per 100,000. Rates in all other age groups decreased slightly and were lowest in women aged 15-34 at 1.3 per 100,000.

England

In England, the number of alcohol-related deaths increased over the 1991-2008 period. The lowest figure was recorded in 1992 at 3,109 and the highest was in 2008 at 6,771. The largest yearly increases occurred between 1996 and 1997 (from 3,987 to 4,435) and between 2000 and 2001, (from 5,039 to 5,479).

Alcohol-related death rates in men more than doubled during the period, rising from 8.2 per 100,000 in 1992 and 1993 to 16.7 per 100,000 in 2008. For women, the rates ranged from 4.2 per 100,000 in 1992 to 8.0 in 2007. In 2008, the rate was 7.9 per 100,000.

Alcohol-related death rates are highest in males aged 55-74. In 2008, the rate for this group was 40.2 per 100,000. Rates for females were also highest in this age group at 19.2 per 100,000. The rate of alcohol-related deaths is lowest for both sexes in the 15-34 age group, at 2.8 per 100,000 for men and 1.2 per 100,000 for women.

Rates in those aged 35-54 and 55-74 increased approximately two-fold within the 1991-2008 period. For males aged 35-54, the rate of alcohol-related deaths ranged from 11.9 per 100,000 in 1993 to 27.7 per 100,000 in 2008. The corresponding figures for females were 5.9 per 100,000 in 1992 and 13.3 per 100,000 in 2006. Alcohol-related death rates have increased steadily in people aged 75 years and over.

Government office regions in England

There is variation in alcohol-related deaths across government office regions in England. Over the 1991-2008 period, rates were highest in London and in the northern regions. The lowest rates were in the East of England. In 2008, alcohol-related death rates in males and females were highest in the North West at 23.0 per 100,000 and 12.6 per 100,000 respectively. The rates were lowest in the East of England at 12.5 per 100,000 and 5.3 per 100,000 respectively.

Alcohol-related death rates have steadily increased in all regions over the period, with the exception of the female rate in London, which was lower in 2008 (5.8 per 100,000) than in 1991 (6.2 per 100,000). The largest yearly increases occurred in the North East between 1996 and 1997 for males (+5.0 per 100,000) and between 2002 and 2003 for females (+3.4 per 100,000).

Wales

Alcohol-related deaths in Wales have largely increased over the 1991-2008 period. For males, the lowest number of deaths was 122 in 1992 and the highest was 344 in 2008. Similarly, for females, there were fewest deaths in 1992 at 77 and most in 2008 at 197. Figures have increased more sharply among men than women, with the largest increase occurring between 2006 and 2007 from 271 (17.2 per 100,000) to 326 (20.4 per 100,000).

There are more alcohol-related deaths in people aged 35-54 and 55-74 than those in younger and older age groups. Over the period, rates increased sharply in men and women aged 35-54 and 55-74, more than doubling from the rates in the early 1990s. In 2008, the highest rates for males and females were in those aged 55-74 at 49.3 per 100,000 and 28.9 per 100,000 respectively. There are fewer alcohol-related deaths among people aged 15-34 and 75 years and over. In 2008, there were 11 and 45 deaths respectively in these age groups.

Alcohol-related death figures for the United Kingdom, England, Wales and government office regions can be found on the Office for National Statistics website at:

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=14496>

Figures for Scotland and Northern Ireland can be accessed using the following links;

General Register Office for Scotland

<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/deaths/alcohol-related-deaths/index.html>

Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

http://www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk/mapxtreme/viewdata/Population_and_Migration/Population/Deaths/Alcohol_Related_Deaths_2001-2007.xls

http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/demography/publications/annual_reports/2008/RG2008.pdf

Definition

The National Statistics definition of alcohol-related deaths only includes those causes regarded as being most directly due to alcohol consumption (Box One). It does not include other diseases where alcohol has been shown to have some causal relationship, such as cancers of the mouth, oesophagus and liver. The definition includes all deaths from chronic liver disease and cirrhosis (excluding biliary cirrhosis), even when alcohol is not specifically mentioned on the death certificate. Apart from deaths due to poisoning with alcohol (accidental, intentional or undetermined), this definition excludes any other external causes of death, such as road traffic and other accidents. The definition allows for consistent comparisons over time for those deaths most clearly associated with alcohol consumption.

Box One

Definition of alcohol-related deaths

International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9)

- 291 Alcoholic psychoses
- 303 Alcohol dependence syndrome
- 305.0 Non-dependent abuse of alcohol
- 425.5 Alcoholic cardiomyopathy
- 571 Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis
(Excluding 571.6 – Biliary cirrhosis)
- E860 Accidental poisoning by alcohol

International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10)

- F10 Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of alcohol
- G31.2 Degeneration of nervous system due to alcohol
- G62.1 Alcoholic polyneuropathy
- I42.6 Alcoholic cardiomyopathy
- K29.2 Alcoholic gastritis
- K70 Alcoholic liver disease
- K73 Chronic hepatitis, not elsewhere classified
- K74 Fibrosis and cirrhosis of liver
(Excluding K74.3-K74.5 – Biliary cirrhosis)
- K86.0 Alcohol induced chronic pancreatitis
- X45 Accidental poisoning by and exposure to alcohol
- X65 Intentional self-poisoning by and exposure to alcohol
- Y15 Poisoning by and exposure to alcohol, undetermined intent

Background Notes

1. ONS holds mortality data for England and Wales. Figures for the UK include data provided by the General Register Office for Scotland and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency.
 2. ICD-10 was introduced in Scotland in 2000 and in England and Wales and Northern Ireland in 2001.
 3. The introduction of ICD-10 in England and Wales in 2001 had a significant effect on mortality rates for some diseases, causing a discontinuity in mortality trends for these causes of death. However, the change resulted in a difference of less than 1% in the number of deaths from alcohol-related causes.
 4. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available from the media office.
 5. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.
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