



February 19th 2021

WEEKLY DEATHS – preliminary data

Weeks 4 and 5 of 2021

MORTALITY IN PORTUGAL IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

DEATHS BY COVID-19 IN WEEKS 4 AND 5 OF 2021 ACCOUNTED FOR, RESPECTIVELY, 43.2% AND 41.8% OF THE TOTAL

In weeks 4 and 5 of 2021, there were 4,711 and 3,825 deaths in Portugal, respectively, 1,878 and 1,131 more deaths than the 2015-2019 average. The number of deaths due to COVID-19 in those weeks was 2,036 and 1,597, representing, respectively, 43.2% and 41.8% of the total deaths.

Of the 8,536 deaths in this period, more than 75% corresponded to people aged 75 years and over. However, the largest excess of mortality was seen in those aged 90 years and over (+74.1% compared to the 2015-2019 average).

The Norte, Centro and Área Metropolitana de Lisboa concentrated 82.6% of deaths in weeks 4 and 5. However, in terms of the number of deaths per 100 thousand inhabitants, only Alentejo (130.0), Centro (103.2) and Área Metropolitana de Lisboa (90.5) had values higher than the national (83.0).

In weeks 4 and 5, 65.2% of deaths occurred in hospitals.

In this press release Statistics Portugal provides preliminary data regarding the evolution of the number of deaths that occurred in the national territory, per week, until the 5th week of 2021 (February 1st to 7th), making a comparison with the average number of deaths for the same period of 2015-2019. The average for 2015 to 2019 provides a reference for the number of deaths expected per week in a normal (non-pandemic) year, considering that there is an excess of mortality when the number of deaths exceeds the average number of that period.

Information on deaths is obtained through the Civil Register collected under the Integrated Civil Registration and Identification System (SIRIC) until February 16th 2021. The information is preliminary and will be subject to updates.



In the weeks 4 and 5 of 2021 there were 8,536 deaths, 3,009 more than the 2015-2019 average in the same period.

In the first weeks of 2020, the number of deaths was, in general, lower than the average values for the period 2015-2019. In March, contrary to past trends, mortality started to increase, reaching a first peak between March 30th and April 5th, to which COVID-19 deaths contributed in part. A new maximum of deaths was reached in mid-July, despite the reduced contribution of the number of deaths due to COVID-19 to the increase in mortality. As the end of the year and the beginning of 2021 approached, this increase was increasingly explained by the increase in deaths due to COVID-19. Since the last week of 2020 (December 28th 2020 to January 3rd 2021), the number of deaths has steadily increased until week 3 (January 18th to 24th), reaching in that week the highest number of weekly deaths observed since the beginning of the pandemic. That week, 5,011 people died, 2,145 more than the 2015-2019 average. The number of deaths by COVID-19 was 1,693 this week, representing 33.8% of the total deaths.

In Figure 1, the shaded bars, defined by the minimum and maximum values of deaths per week in any of the five years between 2015 and 2019, provide an indication of the range of variation in the number of deaths in the considered period. It shows that, as of the beginning of March 2020, the number of deaths was, in general, above the upper limit of this range of values.

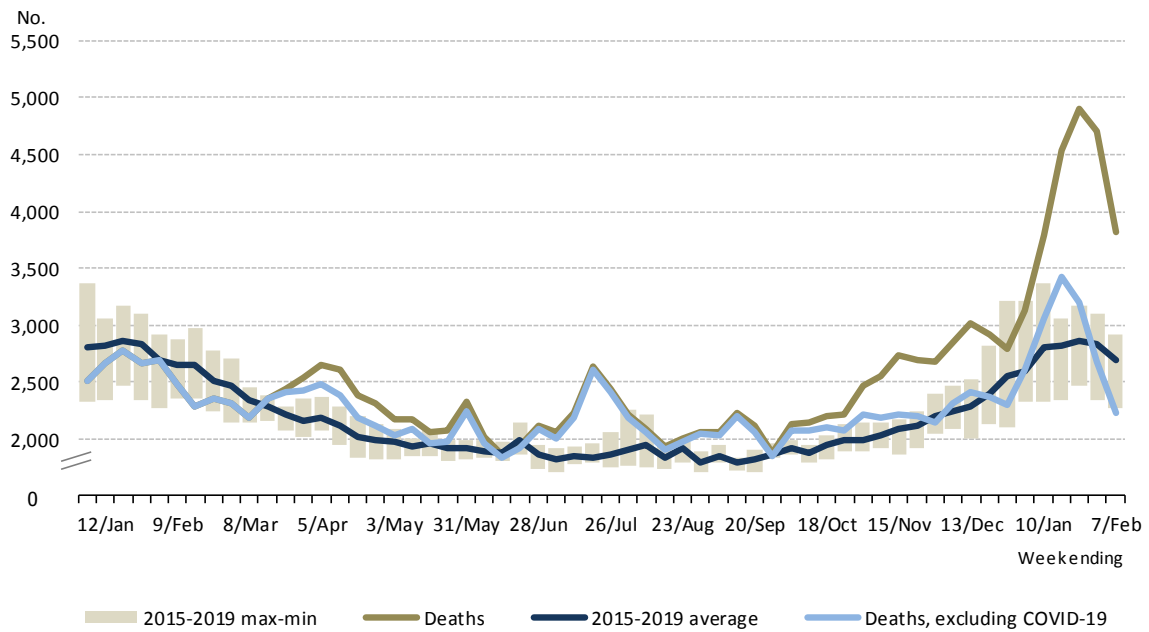
In weeks 4 and 5 of 2021, the number of deaths decreased, despite continuing well above that observed since the beginning of the pandemic. In those two weeks, there were 4,711 and 3,825 deaths in Portugal, respectively (a total of 8,536 deaths). The number of deaths due to COVID-19 in those weeks was 2,036 and 1,597, representing, respectively, 43.2% and 41.8% of the total deaths. In week 4 (January 25th to 31st), it was recorded the highest number of deaths by COVID-19 per week (2,036) observed since the beginning of the pandemic.

In weeks 4 and 5 of 2021, excess mortality was 1,878 and 1,131 deaths, respectively, 66.3% and 42.0% above the 2015-2019 average in the same weeks.

The number of deaths by COVID-19 was, in weeks 4 and 5, above the excess of mortality, which means that excluding deaths by COVID-19, the mortality registered in these two weeks would be below the average of the period 2015 -2019.

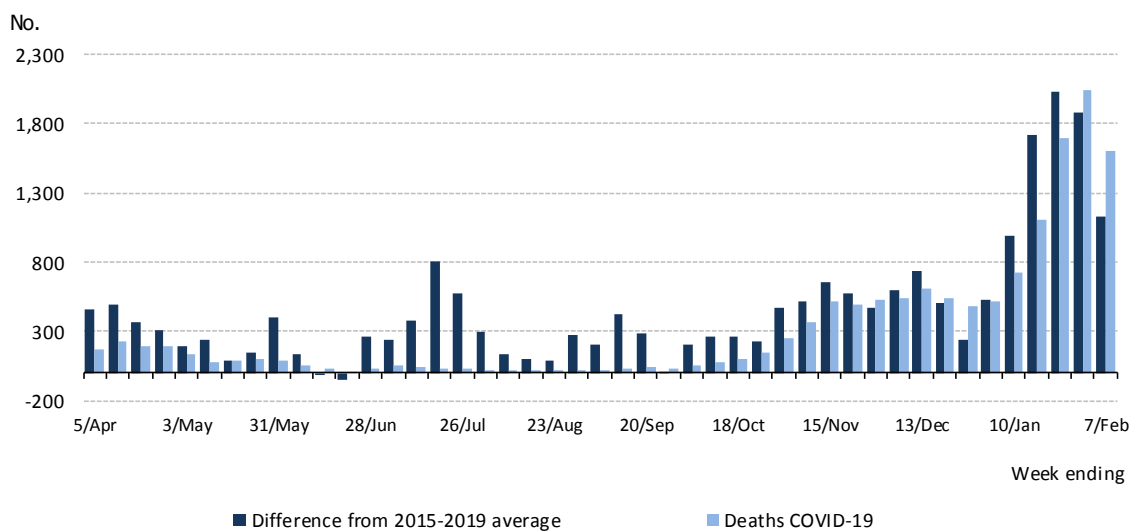
In Figure 2, the bars represent the total weekly death differential relative to the 2015-2019 average for the same period and the number of COVID-19 deaths.

Figure 1: Deaths 2020, 2021 and average 2015-2019, by week, Portugal, weeks 1 of 2020 to 5 of 2021



Source: Statistics Portugal, Deaths. Directorate-General of Health, Daily COVID-19 Status Report.

Figure 2: Difference between deaths 2020, 2021 and 2015-2019 average and COVID-19 deaths, by week, Portugal, weeks 14 of 2020 to 5 of 2021



Source: Statistics Portugal, Deaths. Directorate-General of Health, Daily COVID-19 Status Report.



Excess male mortality higher than female mortality

Between January 25th and February 7th (weeks 4 and 5), there were 4,278 deaths of men and 4,258 of women, an increase of 1,560 and 1,450 deaths, respectively, compared with the 2015-2019 average of deaths in the same weeks.

The number of deaths of men, which at week 4 was 2,382, decreased to 1,896 in week 5, representing, respectively, 49.0 deaths per 100 thousand men at week 4 and 39.0 deaths at week 5.

The number of deaths of women was in week 4 of 2,329, representing 42.8 deaths per 100 thousand women. In the following week it decreased to 1,929 deaths, corresponding to 35.5 deaths per 100 thousand women.

Largest increase in mortality of people aged 90 and over

Between January 25th and February 7th, 75.9% of deaths (6,478 deaths) were of people aged 75 years and over and, of these, 60.9% (3,946) were of people aged 85 and over. However, it was among people aged 90 and over that the greatest excess of mortality was found. In this age group, there were 889 more deaths than the 2015-2019 average, which represented an increase of 74.1%. The second highest increase in mortality was registered in the age group 85 to 89 years, with 677 more deaths than the average (+57.3%).

Alentejo, Centro and Área Metropolitana de Lisboa with the highest number of deaths per 100 thousand inhabitants

Between January 25th and February 7th (weeks 4 and 5) there were 2,177 deaths in the region Norte (25.5% of the total), 2,288 (26.8%) in Centro, 2,590 (30.3%) in Área Metropolitana de Lisboa, 916 (10.7%) in Alentejo, 307 (3.6%) in Algarve, 96 (1.1%) in Região Autónoma dos Açores and 148 (1.7%) in Região Autónoma da Madeira.

However, in relative terms, the highest number of deaths per 100 thousand inhabitants was registered in Alentejo (130.0 deaths), followed by Centro (103.2), by Área Metropolitana de Lisboa (90.5), Algarve (70.0), Norte (60.9) and the autonomous regions of Madeira and Açores (58.2 and 39.6 deaths, respectively).

The number of deaths recorded in weeks 4 and 5 was higher than the 2015-2019 average observed in the same weeks in all regions, except for the Região Autónoma dos Açores in week 4.

More than 65% of deaths occurred in hospitals

Of the total of 8,536 deaths recorded between January 25th and February 7th (weeks 4 and 5), 5,568 (65.2%) took place in a hospital and 2,968 (34.8%) occurred outside the hospital context (at private homes and other places), corresponding, respectively, to increases of 2,153 and 858 deaths compared with the average number of deaths observed in the same weeks of 2015-2019.

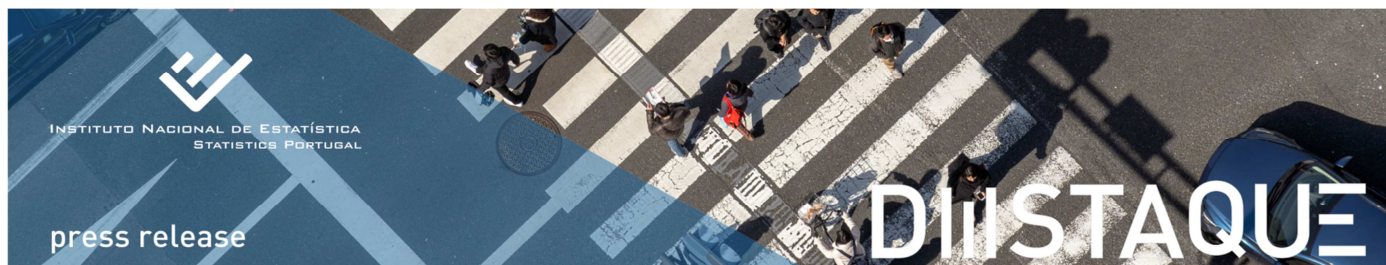


Table 1: Deaths 2021 and 2015-2019 average by week, Portugal, weeks 3 to 5 of 2021

	Week 3 of 2021 (January 18 th to 24 th)					Week 4 of 2021 (January 25 th to 31 st)					Week 5 of 2021 (February 1 st to 7 th)				
	Deaths (No.)	Deaths per 100 000 inhab.	2015-2019 deaths average (homologous week)	Change relative to the 2015-2019 average		Deaths (No.)	Deaths per 100 000 inhab.	2015-2019 deaths average (homologous week)	Change relative to the 2015-2019 average		Deaths (No.)	Deaths per 100 000 inhab.	2015-2019 deaths average (homologous week)	Change relative to the 2015-2019 average	
				Absolute values	%				Absolute values	%				Absolute values	%
Total	5,011	48.7	2,866	2,145	74.8	4,711	45.8	2,833	1,878	66.3	3,825	37.2	2,694	1,131	42.0
Sex															
Males	2,520	51.9	1,414	1,106	78.2	2,382	49.0	1,401	981	70.0	1,896	39.0	1,317	579	44.0
Females	2,491	45.8	1,452	1,039	71.6	2,329	42.8	1,431	898	62.8	1,929	35.5	1,377	552	40.1
NUTS 2															
Norte	1,329	37.2	899	430	47.8	1,187	33.2	899	288	32.0	990	27.7	832	158	19.0
Centro	1,388	62.6	713	675	94.7	1,271	57.3	728	543	74.6	1,017	45.9	703	314	44.7
AM Lisboa	1,445	50.5	732	713	97.4	1,451	50.7	705	746	105.8	1,139	39.8	671	468	69.7
Alentejo	523	74.2	272	251	92.3	511	72.5	259	252	97.3	405	57.5	260	145	55.8
Algarve	194	44.3	129	65	50.4	163	37.2	126	37	29.4	144	32.8	121	23	19.0
RA Açores	47	19.4	49	-2	-4.1	38	15.7	48	-10	-20.8	58	23.9	47	11	23.4
RA Madeira	80	31.5	65	15	23.1	83	32.6	60	23	38.3	65	25.6	53	12	22.6
Age group															
Under 65 years	512	6.4	372	140	37.6	443	5.5	380	63	16.6	404	5.0	351	53	15.1
65 to 69 years	266	3.3	162	104	64.2	269	3.4	159	110	69.2	217	2.7	160	57	35.6
70 to 74 years	377	4.7	220	157	71.4	394	4.9	213	181	85.0	330	4.1	201	129	64.2
75 to 79 years	589	7.3	348	241	69.3	558	7.0	339	219	64.6	465	5.8	308	157	51.0
80 to 84 years	892	11.1	533	359	67.4	844	10.5	521	323	62.0	665	8.3	513	152	29.6
85 to 89 years	1,156	14.4	603	553	91.7	1,044	13.0	591	453	76.6	814	10.2	590	224	38.0
90 years and over	1,219	15.2	628	591	94.1	1,159	14.5	629	530	84.3	929	11.6	570	359	63.0
Place of occurrence															
Hospital	3,170	-	1,748	1,422	81.4	3,063	-	1,749	1,314	75.1	2,505	-	1,666	839	50.4
Another location	1,841	-	1,118	723	64.7	1,648	-	1,083	565	52.2	1,320	-	1,027	293	28.5

Notes:

- (1) Data for 2020 and 2021 are preliminary.
- (2) The total number of deaths may not correspond to the sum of the partial figures by sex and residence, due to the existence of records with unknown sex and residence and because it includes deaths in Portugal from residents abroad.
- (3) The week is defined according to ISO 8601. Every week has 7 days, starts on a Monday and ends on a Sunday. The first week of the year is the one that contains the first Thursday of the year.

Source: Statistics Portugal, Deaths and Annual Provisional Estimates of Resident Population December 31st 2019.



TECHNICAL NOTE

Statistics Portugal releases the preliminary weekly deaths for 2020, based on the information registered in the Civil Register Offices until February 16th 2021.

Data on deaths is obtained from statistical operations of direct and exhaustive collection on live births and deaths in Portuguese territory using facts that are subject to compulsory civil registration (birth and death) in the Sistema Integrado do Registo e Identificação Civil (SIRIC).

In addition to administrative information obtained from Civil Register Offices, Statistics Portugal collects an additional set of variables identified as statistically pertinent to the National Statistic System (NSS) and the European Statistical System (EES).

Data is recorded and sent electronically, in compliance with the requirements set out by Statistics Portugal and laid down in liaison with the Instituto de Registos e Notariado (IRN) and the Instituto de Gestão Financeira e Equipamentos da Justiça (IGFEJ).

In this release data on provisional annual estimates of resident population referenced to December 31st 2019, released on June 15th 2020 (latest figures available), are used in computing the indicators per 100 thousand inhabitants.

Data on the number of deaths by COVID-19 are also used, whose source is the daily situation report COVID-19 of the Directorate-General for Health that provides only a partial measure of the pandemic on mortality. A more comprehensive measure of the impact on mortality may be provided by the difference between the total number of deaths, by all causes of death, and the average number of deaths for 2015-2019, even though there are other known effects on mortality, such as seasonal flu and spikes or hot or cold waves. Thus, it is considered that there is an excess of mortality when the number of deaths, during a certain period of time, exceeds the number of deaths expected for that period, in this case, the average of the period 2015-2019

DEFINITIONS:

Death: The permanent disappearance of vital functions.

Detailed methodological information available at: www.ine.pt, option Products, Metadata system.

Detailed statistical information available at: www.ine.pt, option Products, Statistical data, database, theme Population, subtheme Mortality and life expectancy.