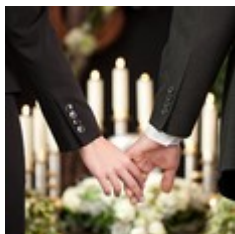


Demography – deaths and causes of deaths in the SR in 2024

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Almost 54000 people died in Slovakia last year, the lowest number since the COVID-19 pandemic

The total mortality rate stabilized at the level of long-term averages in 2024. Compared to the pre-pandemic situation, excess mortality among younger seniors remained, and fewer deaths among people of working age were a positive development. Circulatory system diseases continued to be the most common cause with a share of 45%, though last year significantly fewer people died from these diagnoses compared to the years of the pre-pandemic average. Deaths from COVID-19 infection were already minimal.

Last year, 53.9 thousand people died in Slovakia, which was by 0.5% (257 people) less than in 2023. The total number of deaths was the lowest since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (since 2020). At the same time, it was a comparable value to the mortality rate before the pandemic¹⁾. The current figures were only less than a percent higher (by 352 people) than the five-year average of deaths in 2015-2019. Excess mortality in Slovakia thus reached its minimum in five years and the number of deaths thus significantly approached the pre-pandemic values.

The Statistical Office of the SR publishes a report on the number of deaths by cause of death in the Slovak Republic shortly after the publication of complete definitive demographic data in the Slovak Republic for 2024.

The development of the crude mortality rate also recorded positive values last year. The number of deaths calculated per 100 000 inhabitants²⁾ remained below the threshold of a thousand deaths for the second consecutive year, currently at 994 people. The crude mortality rate enables a more objective comparison of different large territories or long periods of time when the total number of inhabitants in the country changed significantly.

"It can be stated that the development of the crude mortality rate confirmed a return to the pre-crisis normality for the second consecutive year. Excess mortality affected by the COVID-19 in 2021 brought about questions about whether deaths from various other causes would not increase in the following years and excess mortality would persist. This trend has not yet been confirmed", stated Zuzana Podmanická, the Director of the Population Statistics Department of the Statistical Office of the SR.

The crude mortality rate in 2021 reached as high as 1,350 deaths per 100,000 inhabitants. The highest value, over 2,100 deaths, was recorded in 1921. In the pre-pandemic years, since the establishment of the Slovak Republic until 2019, the crude rate oscillated for a long time in the range of 948-998 deaths per 100 000 inhabitants.

Regional differences in mortality

From the perspective of regions, the situation in 2024 improved year-on-year in five of the eight regions of Slovakia, except of Bratislavský, Trnavský and Nitriansky kraj. Compared to the 5-year pre-pandemic average¹⁾, the current number of deaths was lower in four regions – Žilinský, Prešovský, Banskobystrický and Nitriansky kraj. On the contrary, four regions also recorded a slightly higher number of deaths than the average before 2020¹⁾, but these were only very low excess mortality values. In Bratislavský and Trnavský kraj, excess mortality was recorded at up to 5%, and in Trenčiansky and Košický kraj at up to 1%.

The difference in development in the regions was also confirmed by the crude mortality rate. Among the 8 regions of Slovakia, 4 regions recorded a lower crude mortality rate than the Slovak average last year, namely Prešovský (850), Bratislavský (864), Žilinský (954) and Košický kraj (956). The highest and significantly above-average crude mortality rate was in Nitriansky kraj, where 1 145 people per 100 000 inhabitants died in 2024. They were also above the Slovak average in Trnavský, Banskobystrický and Trenčiansky kraj.

Seniors aged 65 to 74 were still the most affected group

More than 78% of all deaths were made up of seniors (65 and over), while their share in the structure of the deceased increased slightly even after the pandemic. In absolute numbers, up to 42.3 thousand deaths were among senior citizens last year.

The number of senior deaths remained unchanged year-on-year, but was still by more than 6% higher than the five-year pre-pandemic average. While older seniors over 75 years of age died only 3% more than before the pandemic, the group of younger seniors (from 65 to 74 years of age) continued to have higher excess mortality, at almost 14% compared to the pre-pandemic average¹⁾, which represents an increase of more than 1 600 people.

A positive trend last year was a significant decrease in deaths in the productive age group (15 to 64 years old). Compared to the pre-pandemic five-year average, by more than 2 000 fewer people died (by 15.5%).

Fewer deaths from circulatory system diseases and tumors affected overall mortality

After the pandemic subsided, diseases that had long been prevalent in Slovakia were once again among the main causes of death. Circulatory system diseases, which continue to be the most common cause of death in the country, significantly contributed to the decrease in overall mortality in 2024. Almost 24.3 thousand people died as a result of these diseases, by 1 200 people less than the pre-pandemic average. The number of deaths from circulatory system diseases decreased by more than 1% year-on-year and was also by 5% lower than the pre-pandemic average¹⁾. The current share of this cause in the total number of deaths reached 45% last year.

The most significant decrease in deaths from circulatory system diseases was recorded in the group of people of productive age (from 15 to 64 years). While their number was lower by 3% year-on-year, it was almost lower by 18% compared to the average for years not marked by a pandemic.

Tumors were also the second most common cause of death in 2024, representing almost 25% of the total number of deaths. The number of deaths from this diagnosis decreased by 1.5% year-on-year and by 2.3% compared to the pre-pandemic average. In total, more than 13 300 people died of tumors last year. More than three-quarters of them were seniors in the age group 65 and over.

Third place in the ranking of causes of death belonged to respiratory diseases, which represented almost 9% of the total number of deaths. Their number increased by almost 4% year-on-year and was higher by more than 18% compared to the pre-pandemic period. This increase was hampered by an even more significant decrease in overall excess mortality. Almost 4 700 people died from respiratory diseases in 2024.

COVID-19 infection has moved aside in the statistics of causes of death

200 people died from COVID-19 infection last year, which represents a year-on-year decrease by 62%. This was the lowest number of deaths in the last five years. Of the total number of deaths, infection represented only 0.4% and was thus ranked

among the causes of death that only slightly affect mortality in Slovakia.

In the list of causes of death according to the International Classification of Diseases (ICD)³⁾, COVID-19 infection has dropped to 11th place. For comparison, in 2022 it was the fifth most common cause of death in Slovakia and in 2021 it was even the second, right after diseases of the circulatory system. In total, almost 22.5 thousand people have died in the Slovak Republic from the consequences of infection since the beginning of the pandemic.

- 1) due to an objective answer to the question to what extent the current mortality rate was worse than in the period before the pandemic, the Statistical Office of the SR adjusted the selection of years from which the average number of deaths before the pandemic was calculated. The values for 2015-2019 were calculated into the 5-year average, which were the last years unaffected by the pandemic. The year 2020 was already influenced by the pandemic especially in the last months of the year, the year 2021 in the first and last months of the year and the year 2022 mostly in the first months of the year
- 2) for the purposes of calculating the gross mortality rate, the average number of inhabitants (as of July 1) is used
- 3) causes of death are classified according to 22 categories of diseases of the **International Classification of Diseases (ICC)**.

Data source:

Data on mortality and causes of death can be found at www.statistics.sk in the DATAcube.:

- [Deaths by Month of Death, Age, Sex and Causes of Death - SR-Area-Reg \(monthly\) \[om3801mr\]](#)
The datacube includes the numbers of deaths and causes of death in the SR according to 22 groups of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) by months (including COVID-19). It also contains regional structures (regions, SR), age structures (pre-productive, productive and post-productive age, as well as age groups after 5 years). Monthly data for 2025 are preliminary, data for previous years are definitive.

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