

## Demography – deaths and causes of deaths in the SR in the 2nd quarter of 2023

Posledná aktualizácia: 26.04.2024 | Počet zobrazení: null



Vydavateľ: null

Tématická oblasť: null

Okruh: null

Dátum publikovania: 26.07.2023

### The number of deaths remained below the average of the pre-pandemic years, though excess mortality persisted among younger seniors

The two most common causes of death – diseases of the circulatory system and tumors - recorded a decrease. However, the excess mortality by 12% remained in the group of younger seniors between the ages of 65 and 74. From a regional perspective, Trenčiansky and Košický kraj also had a slightly above-average number of deaths.

In the second quarter of 2023, the total mortality rate in Slovakia dropped below the long-term pre-pandemic average after two years. In total, 12.3 thousand people died in the SR between April and June of this year, which is by almost 11% fewer people (by 1.5 thousand) year-on-year. At the same time, there were by 3.1% fewer deaths than the five-year average of 2015-2019 before the onset of the pandemic<sup>1</sup>). This follows from preliminary data on the number of deaths and causes of death for the second quarter of 2023, which are currently published by the Statistical Office of the SR.

*"Less deaths compared to the five-year average in the first and second quarter were influenced mainly by the lower number of deaths in the two most common causes of death - diseases of the circulatory system and tumors, in addition to the recession of the pandemic,"* said Zuzana Podmanická, the Director of the Department of Population Statistics of the Statistical Office of the SR.

The fading of the COVID-19 pandemic was also reflected in the lower gross mortality rate. The number of deaths per 100 000 inhabitants<sup>2</sup>) reached 904 deaths in the second quarter of this year. On average, during the corresponding period of the last 5 years before the pandemic, it was at the level of 931 deaths per 100 000 inhabitants. The crude death rate was thus lower than the five-year average before the pandemic for the second consecutive quarter.

### Significantly fewer people died in the productive age group

The largest group of those who died are long-term seniors aged 65 and over, in the 2nd quarter they represented almost 78% of the total number of deaths (9.5 thousand people). Their number was less than 2% higher than the five-year pre-pandemic average, but at the same time by 10 % lower than last year. While fewer people died in the group of older seniors over 75 than on average before the pandemic, in the group of younger seniors (from 65 to 74 years old) a relatively high death rate still remained, i.e. in this age group, the number of deaths still exceeded the pre-pandemic average by 12%<sup>1</sup>).

Most significantly, similarly as in the first quarter, the current mortality rate decreased in the productive age group (15 to 64 years). Year-on-year, the number of deaths decreased by 12% and compared to the five-year average even by 17%. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of this year, 2.7 thousand people died in this age category.

The number of deaths in the second quarter of this year decreased year-on-year in all regions of Slovakia. In six cases, the number of deaths was lower even compared to the pre-pandemic average). Only Trenčiansky (1.8%) and Košický kraj (0.8%) recorded a slight excess mortality. Prešovský and Nitriansky kraj had the highest mortality rate, by more than 7%, compared to the corresponding period not marked by the pandemic.

After taking into account the size of the regions in terms of population, the gross mortality rate decreased in all eight regions of Slovakia. It was the lowest in Bratislavský and Prešovský kraj with less than 780 deaths per 100 000 inhabitants. The worst situation within the SR was in Banskobystrický kraj, where the mortality rate in the 2nd quarter represented a value up to 1 045 deaths per 100 000 inhabitants.

## COVID-19 was the eighth of the 22 most common cause of death

From the beginning of April to the end of June of this year, 62 people died as a result of the COVID-19, which is almost seven times less than in the corresponding period in 2022. With a share of less than 0.5% of all deaths, COVID-19 was included among the causes that only slightly affect mortality in the long term. It moved to the 8th rank among 22 groups of diseases<sup>3)</sup>.

The long-term most frequent cause of death in the SR– diseases of the circulatory system, which represented 46% of deaths (5.6 thousand people) - contributed significantly to the reduction in mortality. Their number decreased by almost 9% year-on-year and by more than 6% compared to the pre-pandemic average.

The second most common cause of death in the SR- tumors, which claimed almost 3.2 thousand victims in the second quarter and it represented 26% of the total deaths. In the last two years, fewer people died from cancer than the five-year average before the pandemic. In the second quarter, there was a lower mortality rate within this group of causes of death by almost 3%.

## The total mortality rate in Slovakia also decreased in the first half of 2023

In total, in the first half of 2023, 26.5 thousand people died in Slovakia, which represented a 13% decrease year-on-year. Compared to the five-year average before the pandemic, the number of the deceased was almost by 4% less.

- 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](http://www.statistics.sk) in the DATAcube. database of the Statistical Office of the SR.:

- [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 2022 are preliminary, data for previous years are definitive.

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