

Births, deaths and other vital events

Third quarter 2019

Published on 11 December 2019

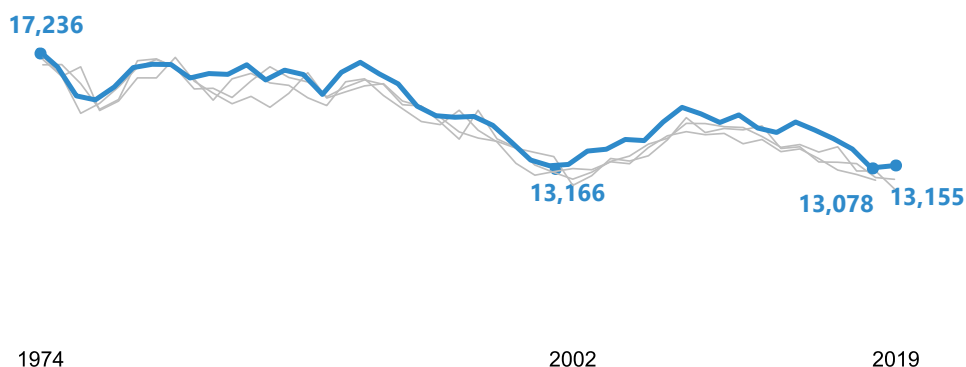


This release presents provisional figures for vital events which were registered in Scotland in the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019, inclusive. The tables provide statistics of births, stillbirths, marriages, civil partnerships and deaths.

Quarter 3 births at second lowest recorded level

There were 13,155 births in 2019 quarter 3, the second lowest quarter 3 total since civil registration began and 7.0% lower than the quarter 3 average over the previous 5 years.

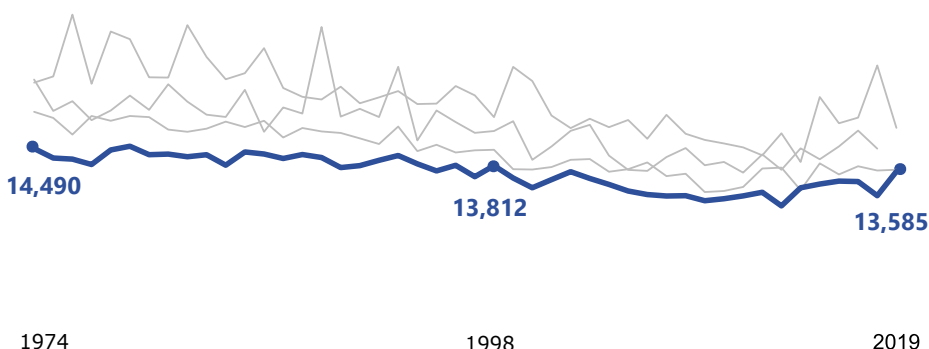
Number of births by quarter (Q1, Q2, **Q3**, Q4)



Quarter 3 deaths are at their highest level in over twenty years.

There were 13,585 deaths in 2019 quarter 3. This is the highest quarter 3 total since 1998 and is 11.1% higher than the 2013 figure, which was the lowest recorded quarter three total.

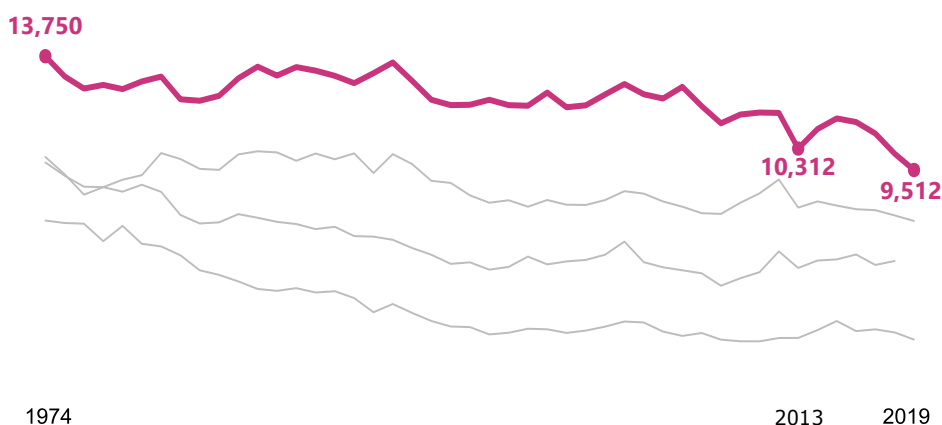
Number of deaths by quarter (Q1, Q2, **Q3**, Q4)



Quarter 3 marriages fall to lowest level since the 1930s

There were 9,512 marriages in 2019 quarter 3; 13.1% fewer than the quarter 3 average over the past five years, lower than the most recent low point in 2013 and the lowest total for the third quarter since 1932.

Number of marriages by quarter (Q1, Q2, **Q3**, Q4)



Contents

1.	Main points	5
2.	Introduction.....	6
3.	Commentary	6
4.	Background to these statistics.....	7
	Notes on statistical publications.....	10
	Related organisations	12

List of tables

Table Q1 Births, stillbirths, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships, numbers and rates, Scotland, quarterly, 2009 to 2019

Table Q2 Estimated population, births, stillbirths, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships, numbers and rates, by administrative area, Scotland, third quarter, 2019

Table Q3 Deaths, by sex, age and administrative area, Scotland, third quarter, 2019

Table Q4 Deaths, by cause, Scotland, third quarter 2014-2019

Table Q5 Deaths by sex, age and cause, Scotland, third quarter, 2019

Table Q6 Deaths by sex, cause and NHS Board area, Scotland, third quarter, 2019

List of Figures

Figure 1 Births, deaths and marriages registered in rolling periods of four quarters, 1974-2019

Figure 2 Age-standardised death rates for rolling periods of four quarters, 1990-2019

The tables and chart above have been made available as [Excel spreadsheets](#) and can also be viewed in [Comma Separated Value \(CSV\)](#) format.

1. Main points

- There were 13,155 births and 13,585 deaths registered in Scotland between 1 July and 30 September 2019.
- At 13,155, the number of births was the second lowest quarter three total since civil registration began in 1855 (only 2018 was lower). Compared to the quarter three average for the previous five years, births have fallen by 7.0 per cent and deaths have risen by 4.4 per cent.
- Expressed as a rate, there were 9.6 births per 1,000 population.
- At 13,585, the number of deaths registered was the highest quarter three total since 1998 (13,812). The 2019 quarter three deaths figure is 11.1 per cent higher than the 2013 quarter three figure (12,224), which was the lowest number of deaths ever recorded in the third quarter.
- Expressed as a rate, there were 9.9 deaths per 1,000 population.
- The age-standardised mortality rate for the four-quarter period ending in 2019 quarter 3 was 1.3 per cent higher than the previous four-quarter period. This rate takes into account the growing and ageing population and is therefore the best indicator of the direction of the mortality trend.
- Compared with the third quarter average over the previous five years, 2014-2018:
 - The number of cancer deaths rose by 5.0 per cent to 4,157;
 - The number of deaths from dementia and Alzheimer's disease rose by 18.2 per cent to 1,473;
 - The number of deaths from coronary heart disease fell by 3.6 per cent to 1,462;
 - Deaths from respiratory diseases fell by 11.7 per cent to 1,222;
 - There were 843 deaths from cerebrovascular disease (a decrease of 7.0 per cent).
- There were 9,512 marriages in total. This is 13.1 per cent lower than the average number of third quarter marriages for the previous five years, and the lowest quarter three marriage figure since 1932. There were 352 same-sex marriages, 20 fewer than in 2018 quarter three. Of the same sex marriages registered in the third quarter, 15 (4.3 per cent) were changes from civil partnerships
- There were 22 civil partnerships (10 male and 12 female), ten more than in the third quarter of 2018.

2. Introduction

This release presents provisional figures for vital events which were registered in Scotland in the period from 1 July to 30 September 2019, inclusive. The tables and chart provide statistics of births, stillbirths, marriages, civil partnerships and deaths, including:

- quarterly figures for Scotland for each of the past ten years;
- the totals for each Local Authority and NHS Board area for the latest quarter; and
- more detailed analyses of the numbers of deaths (for example cross-classified by sex, cause and NHS Board area) for the latest quarter.

3. Commentary

The number of births in the third quarter of 2019 (13,155), was the second lowest quarter three total since civil registration began in 1855 (only 2018 was lower).

The total number of quarter three births had fallen to a previous low of 13,166 in 2001. It then rose to 15,520 in 2008 before falling again in more recent years to a low of 13,078 in 2018. There is no single reason for the downward trend in the number of births, but possible causes may include the postponement of childbearing until later in life; and economic uncertainty influencing decisions around childbearing, as the beginning of the recent fall coincided with the financial crash a decade ago.

The number of deaths registered in the third quarter of 2019 (13,585) was the highest quarter three total since 1998 (13,812).. The 2019 quarter three deaths figure is 11.1 per cent higher than the 2013 quarter three figure (12,224), which was the lowest number of deaths ever recorded in the third quarter. Expressed as a rate, there were 9.9 deaths per 1,000 population.

Compared with the third quarter average over the previous five years, 2014-2018, the number of deaths from dementia and Alzheimer's disease and from cancer rose, whilst deaths from coronary heart disease, respiratory diseases and cerebrovascular disease all fell.

Over the longer term, deaths from coronary heart disease and cerebrovascular disease have decreased considerably whilst the number of deaths from cancer and respiratory disease has risen slightly. There has been a relatively large increase in the number of deaths from dementia and Alzheimer's disease with such deaths now accounting for more than 10 per cent of all deaths compared to 5 per cent a decade ago.

The quarterly tables, which can be downloaded from the [National Records of Scotland \(NRS\) website](#), contain further detailed statistics on births, deaths and other vital events, including figures for NHS Boards and local authority areas.

For the four most recent quarters (2018 Q4 to 2019 Q3) there were 50,588 births and 57,028 deaths, a shortfall of 6,440 births compared to deaths. Having less births than deaths in a population is referred to as 'negative natural change', meaning that without external factors (such as migration) the population will fall. Scotland has been in a position of negative natural change since the period ending 2015 Q1. Prior to this, there was a sustained period of positive natural change (i.e. more births than deaths) going back to 2006. As can be seen from figure 1, the gap between births and deaths has fluctuated

over time and there have been several periods of both positive and natural change over the last 40 years.

Figure 1: Births, deaths and marriages registered in rolling periods of four quarters

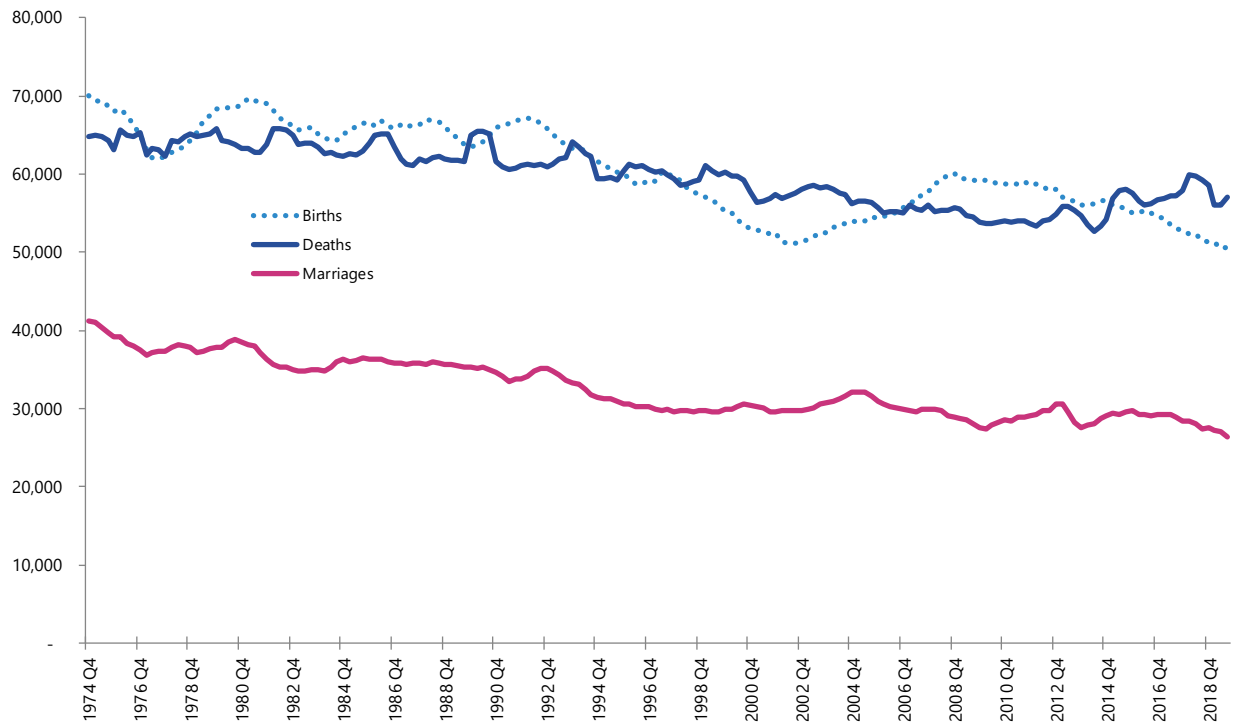
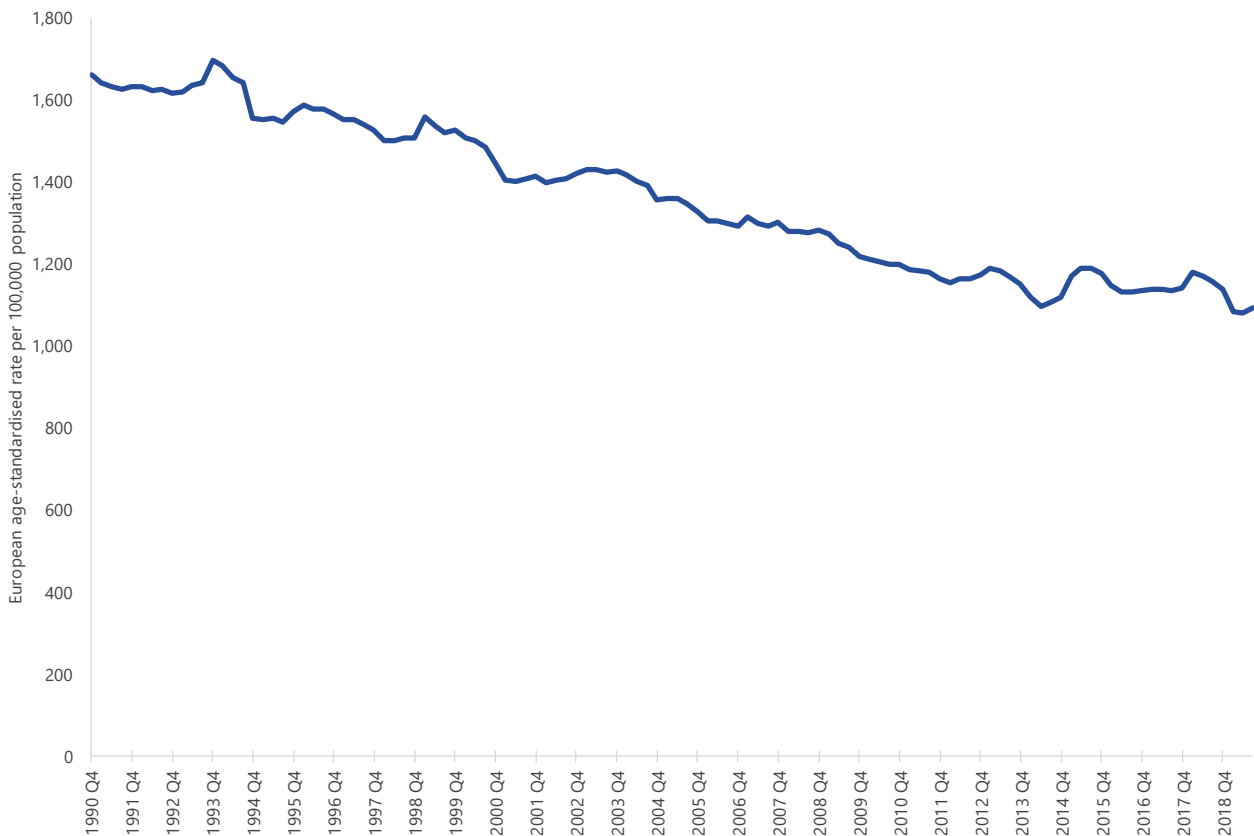


Figure 2: Age-standardised death rates for rolling periods of four quarters



Given the increasing interest in the changing direction of the mortality trend, we are now publishing age-standardised mortality rates on a quarterly basis rather than an annual update. Figure 2 illustrates age-standardised mortality rates for each four-quarter period from the period ending 1990 Q4 to that ending 2019 Q3. These figures are based on rolling periods of four quarters to reduce fluctuations and reduce seasonal variation. There is a large degree of seasonality in mortality, with higher number of deaths occurring in winter than in summer, so it does not make sense to compare a quarter 2 figure with a quarter 1 figure, for example.

Despite the attempts to reduce fluctuations, it is clear that there are still considerable fluctuations in the time series. Particularly of note in the most recent period are the increases in early 2015 and 2018 due to high winter mortality in quarter one of these years. As these rates are based on rolling four quarter periods, the impact of the high quarter one is also seen in the figures for the following three data points before dropping out when the next year's quarter one figure is picked up.

The rate for the period ending 2019 Q3 was 1.3 per cent higher than that for the period ending 2019 Q2.

The longer term trend shows a clear decrease over time, although there have been fluctuations along the way. Until recently, the period ending 2014 Q2 represented the lowest point in the trend with 1,096.8 deaths per 100,000 population. Since then there has been little change (with the two notable fluctuations previously discussed in 2015 and 2018). The 2019 Q1 rate of 1,084.7 per 100,000, the 2019 Q2 rate of 1081.2 represent slight decreases on this level, and the Q3 rate of 1095.0 has risen back to a similar level. However it should be noted that these are calculated using 2018-based population projections and may be revised once population estimates for 2019 have been published in April 2020.

4. Background to these statistics

This is a quarterly publication. NRS collects the underlying data on a daily basis, as and when each event is registered. The statistics for 2019 are all provisional.

Information about (for example) the sources, methods, definitions and reliability of these statistics is available from the following NRS web site pages [general background information on Vital Events statistics and background information on points which are specific to statistics about deaths](#). These figures are directly comparable with those for other parts of the UK, there are no significant differences across the UK in how Vital Events data are collected and processed.

The United Kingdom 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, and

- 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.

More detailed commentary on the final Vital Events statistics for calendar years as a whole (including some comparisons of the figures for different years, for parts of Scotland and for some other countries) can be found in the relevant chapters of [Scotland's Population - the Registrar General's Annual Review of Demographic Trends](#).

Notes on statistical publications

National Statistics

The UK Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in line with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#) (available on the UK Statistics Authority website).

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is National Records of Scotland's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

Information on background and source data

Further details on data source(s), timeframe of data and timeliness, continuity of data, accuracy can be found in the 'About this Publication' document that is published alongside this publication on the NRS website.

National Records of Scotland

We, the National Records of Scotland, are a non-ministerial department of the devolved Scottish Administration. Our purpose is to collect, preserve and produce information about Scotland's people and history and make it available to inform current and future generations. We do this as follows:

- Preserving the past – We look after Scotland's national archives so that they are available for current and future generations, and we make available important information for family history.
- Recording the present – At our network of local offices, we register births, marriages, civil partnerships, deaths, divorces and adoptions in Scotland.
- Informing the future – We are responsible for the Census of Population in Scotland which we use, with other sources of information, to produce statistics on the population and households.

You can get other detailed statistics that we have produced from the [Statistics](#) section of our website. Scottish Census statistics are available on the [Scotland's Census](#) website.

We also provide information about [future publications](#) on our website. If you would like us to tell you about future statistical publications, you can register your interest on the Scottish Government [ScotStat website](#).

You can also follow us on twitter [@NatRecordsScot](#)

Revisions and Corrections

We, the National Records of Scotland, label any revisions and corrections that we have applied to any of our statistics. These revisions and corrections are clearly marked on the webpage of the publication as well on our [revisions and corrections](#) page available on the NRS website.

Where applicable, revisions will also be carried out in accordance with the [revisions policy for population, migration and life events](#) statistics available on the ONS website.

Enquiries and suggestions

Please contact our Statistics Customer Services if you need any further information.

Email: statisticscustomerservices@nrscotland.gov.uk

If you have comments or suggestions that would help us improve our standards of service, please contact:

Alan Ferrier
Senior Statistician
National Records of Scotland
Room 1/2/12
Ladywell House
Ladywell Road
Edinburgh
EH12 7TF

Phone: 0131 314 4530

Email: alan.ferrier@nrscotland.gov.uk

Related organisations

Organisation	Contact
<p>The Scottish Government (SG) forms the bulk of the devolved Scottish Administration. The aim of the statistical service in the SG is to provide relevant and reliable statistical information, analysis and advice that meets the needs of government, business and the people of Scotland.</p>	<p>Office of the Chief Statistician and Strategic Analysis Scottish Government 2W, St Andrews House Edinburgh EH1 3DG</p> <p>Phone: 0131 244 0442</p> <p>Email: statistics.enquiries@gov.scot</p> <p>Website: http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics</p>
<p>The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is responsible for producing a wide range of economic and social statistics. It also carries out the Census of Population for England and Wales</p>	<p>Customer Contact Centre Office for National Statistics Room 1.101 Government Buildings Cardiff Road Newport NP10 8XG</p> <p>Phone: 0845 601 3034 Minicom: 01633 815044</p> <p>Email: info@statistics.gsi.gov.uk</p> <p>Website: www.ons.gov.uk/</p>
<p>The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) is Northern Ireland's official statistics organisation. The agency is also responsible for registering births, marriages, adoptions and deaths in Northern Ireland, and the Census of Population.</p>	<p>Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency Colby House Stranmillis Court Belfast BT9 5RR</p> <p>Phone: 0300 200 7836</p> <p>Email: info.nisra@dfpni.gov.uk</p> <p>Website: www.nisra.gov.uk</p>

© Crown Copyright 2019

You may use or re-use this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. Further is available within the [Copyright & Disclaimer](#) section of the National Records of Scotland website.