

# Vital Events Reference Tables 2008

## Notes and Definitions

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## **General**

### **Abbreviations**

The following abbreviations are used:

P -	Persons	NS -	Not Stated
M -	Males	HBA -	Health Board Area
F -	Females	NK -	Not Known
ICD -	International Classification of Diseases		

### **Tabular Conventions**

Where a range of years is listed in a time series table, e.g. 1951-55, the data presented will be an average for this period.

Throughout the tables 'year' means 'calendar year' except where otherwise defined. By convention, many of the time series presented start at census years e.g. 1991.

Rates given as '0' or '0.0' indicate that the actual rate is less than 0.5 and 0.05 respectively. Cases where there were no events at all are normally indicated by the use of a dash (-), but this may not always be the case: occasionally, a zero (0) may be used to indicate that there were no events, or a dash may appear where the rate was very low but not zero. Dots (...) in any cell indicate that the information is not available, or, in the case of a rate, that the denominator may not be available.

In tabulations using ages and age-groups, or years, the sign < followed by a figure means up to but not including the figure stated, e.g. < 4 weeks means 'under 4 weeks'. Where two ages appear in the same column, for example 20-24, both ages are included.

### **Administrative areas**

Administrative areas are Council areas and Health Board areas.

Note that:

- from 1 January 1998 the Council area formerly described as Western Isles became known by its Gaelic name, Eilean Siar.
- from 1 April 2006, responsibility for the former NHS Argyll and Clyde Board area was split between NHS Greater Glasgow (now renamed Greater Glasgow and Clyde) and NHS Highland. Tables for the NHS Board Areas show the "new" areas.

### **Date of registration and place of residence or occurrence**

All the data presented on births, stillbirths, marriages, civil partnerships and deaths relate to the date of registration of the event and not to the date of occurrence. For example, a birth on 31 December 2005 which was registered on 5 January 2006 would be included in the 2006 figures. Births and stillbirths are usually registered within the statutory period of 21 days. Similarly, marriages and civil partnerships are usually registered within 3 days, and deaths within 8 days.

However, it should be noted that some of the numbers of births and deaths that appear elsewhere on the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) web site are on a different basis from the figures that are given in these tables. For example, the "components of population change" (in the "Population estimates" part of the GROS web site) give the numbers of births and deaths which occurred between the middle of one year and the middle of the next year: in that case, data for (say) "2007-2008" relate to the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008, and a birth which occurred on 29 June 2008 would be included in the "2007-2008" total, and in the estimate of the population "as at 30 June 2008", even if it was not registered until (say) 8 July 2008.

Births, stillbirths and deaths are generally allocated to the area of usual residence (of the mother, for births and stillbirths; of the deceased, for deaths) if it is in Scotland, otherwise they are allocated to the area of occurrence. However, a death may be allocated to the deceased's former area of residence, if that is in Scotland and the deceased had lived at his/her usual residence for less than 12 months.

Marriage and civil partnership figures relate to the area of occurrence.

### **Age**

Ages relate to the age at the last birthday.

Average ages (such as the average age at death, and the average age of mothers at childbirth) are calculated by adding 0.5 years to the age at the last birthday. For example, for the purpose of calculating an overall average age at death, it is assumed that the average age of 77-year-olds who died was 77 years and 6 months.

### **Age standardisation**

A straight comparison of crude rates between areas may present a misleading picture because of differences in the sex and age structure of the respective populations. The technique of standardisation has been used in certain tables to remedy this. In general, standardisation involves a comparison of the actual number of events occurring in an area with the aggregate number expected if the age/sex specific rates in the standard population were applied to the age/sex groups of the observed population. The results have been expressed either as standardised rates (Table 1.3 and Table 1.4) or as standardised mortality ratios (SMRs) where the standard rate (for Scotland or the United Kingdom) equals 100 (Table 1.5 and Table 1.7).

### **Population**

All population figures refer to estimates at 30 June of the year in question.

The estimated population of an area includes all those usually resident there whatever their nationality. Students are treated as being resident at their term-time address. Members of UK and non-United Kingdom armed forces stationed in Scotland are included; UK forces stationed outside Scotland are excluded. Short-term international migrants are excluded.

## **Births**

The presumption in law in relation to the registration of births is that the husband of a married woman is the father of her child unless proven otherwise.

When parents are not married to each other the mother is the primary informant of the birth and the father's name can only be entered in the register if (a) they register the birth jointly; (b) a court decree is produced declaring the person to be the father or (c) there is produced to the registrar at the time of registration a statutory declaration signed by one parent together with a declaration signed by the other parent in the registrar's presence.

A father's name can be added to the register at any time after the birth using (b) or (c) above.

A cohort is a well-defined group of people who have had a common experience or exposure who are observed through time. For example, the birth cohort of 1900 refers to people born in that year.

## **Fertility rates**

The general fertility rate (GFR) is the number of births per 1000 women of child-bearing age (15-44).

The total fertility rate (TFR) is the average number of children that would be born to a cohort of women who experienced, throughout their childbearing years, the fertility rates of the calendar year in question.

The age specific fertility rate (ASFR) is the number of births per individual for a specific age during a specified time.

The gross reproduction rate is the average number of live daughters that would be born to a cohort of women who experienced, throughout their childbearing years, the fertility rates of the calendar year in question. And the net reproduction rate is the average number of these live daughters that, subject to the mortality rates of the calendar year in question, would survive to the mothers' age at the time of birth.

## **Marital status of parents**

married parents: refers to parents who are married to each other

unmarried parents: refers to parents who are unmarried or married but not to each other.

## **Stillbirths and Infant Deaths**

Stillbirths Section 56(1) of the Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages (Scotland) Act 1965 defined a stillbirth as a child which had issued forth from its mother after the 28th week of pregnancy and which did not breathe or show any other sign of life. The Still-Birth (Definition) Act 1992, which came into effect on 1 October 1992, amended Section 56(1) of the 1965 Act (and other relevant UK legislation), replacing the reference to the 28th week with a reference to the 24th week.

The tables in Section 4 show figures for all gestations of 24 weeks or longer but to assist in the interpretation of trends, most time series tables show figures based on both the old and the new definitions.

Perinatal deaths refer to stillbirths and deaths in the first week of life.

Neonatal deaths refer to deaths in the first four weeks of life.

Postneonatal deaths refer to deaths after the first four weeks but before the end of the first year.

Infant deaths refer to all deaths in the first year of life.

Stillbirth rates and perinatal death rates are based on the total of live and still births; neonatal, postneonatal and infant death rates are based on live births only.

## **Deaths and Cause of Death**

### **Cause of death coding**

Causes of death are coded in accordance with the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (Tenth Revision) (ICD10). Classification of underlying cause of death is based on information collected on the medical certificate of cause of death together with any additional information provided subsequently by the certifying doctor. Changes notified to GROS by Procurators Fiscal are also taken into account. In cases of homicide, suicide, and other deaths from violence, advice may be sought from the Crown Office. On 1 January 1996 GROS introduced an automated method of coding cause of death. A detailed note on this may be found in Appendix 1 of the 1996 Annual Report.

From 1 January 2000, deaths in Scotland have been coded using the latest, tenth, revision of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases, Injuries and Causes of Death (ICD10).

The GROS web site provides more detailed information about death certificates, other sources of information, coding the causes of death, and how statistics of deaths from certain causes are produced.

### **Cause lists used in these reference tables**

Full 3-character list (Table 6.4) This shows all 3-character ICD10 codes for which at least one death was recorded during the specified year.

Summary list (Table 6.1, Table 6.2 and Table 6.3) The summary list is closely based on a short list of 65 categories recommended by Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union. The GROS list presents 66 categories, including sub-totals for all the main ICD10 Chapters. In the tables using this list, the sub-categories do not necessarily sum to the main groups. The one additional category identified in the GROS list is 'malignant neoplasm of the larynx'; this is combined with 'trachea, bronchus and lung' in the 65 category list.

Perinatal summary list (Table 4.4 to Table 4.7) This additional summary list highlights causes associated with the perinatal period.

Years of life lost (Table 6.13) provides information on years of life lost for selected causes of death. Simply, the number of years of life lost is the sum of the differences between the age at death and 90 for 'total' years lost or 65 for years of 'working' life lost. Note that the age at death is taken to be the mid-point of a 5 year age band. The period of 'total' life lost is deemed to include all deaths up until the age of 90, so anyone dying at the age of 93 would contribute zero years to the total. The 'working' life period covers all ages between the ages of 15 and 64, and it is assumed that any death under the age of 15 contributes 50 years to the 'working' life lost total. For example someone dying at the age of 38 would contribute 28 years (37 (mid-point of 35-39 year age band) subtracted from 65) to the 'working life' lost total.

## **Marriages**

The tables in this section cover all marriages which were registered as having taken place in Scotland regardless of the usual residence of the parties involved. A number of couples who are resident in Scotland now go abroad to be married. These marriages are not included in this chapter, and only some come to the attention of the Registrar General through notification to British Consular authorities.

By the Marriage (Scotland) Act 1939, which came into operation on 1 July 1940, civil marriages were introduced and irregular marriages, other than marriages by cohabitation with habit and repute, were abolished. Although two of the three types of irregular marriage were abolished in 1940 all three types of irregular marriage can be established by Decree of Declarator of the Court of Session. The irregular marriages shown in Table 7.6 are those established by Decree of Declarator of the Court of Session in the years shown although the events took place earlier.

## **Divorces**

The data presented on divorces relate to the date on which each decree was granted. This is a change from the basis used for the figures which appeared in previous editions, when a small proportion of cases (broadly speaking, those for which GROS received the data more than two months after the end of the year in which the divorces were granted) were counted against the year in which GROS processed the data. The method of producing the figures has been corrected, and the series has been revised back to 1985, so that it now gives the number of divorces which were granted in each year from 1985. Further information about the revision of the historical series of Divorce statistics can be found on the GROS web site, in the "Points to Note about the Divorce statistics" pages.

In all tables the total of divorces includes nullities.

The information available covers divorces granted under the Divorce (Scotland) Act 1976 and the Family Law (Scotland) Act 2006. It excludes 14 cases in 1981 and 4 cases in 1982 where divorces were granted under the Divorce (Scotland) Act 1964. Further details of divorces granted under earlier legislation can be found in previous reports.

In legal terms the 1976 Act introduced a single ground for divorce - irretrievable breakdown of marriage - with the detailed reasons as 'proofs'. However, the information presented in this Report on reasons for divorce retains the terminology 'grounds for divorce'.

The grounds for divorce were amended by the Family Law (Scotland) Act 2006, which came into effect on 4 May 2006. The Act reduced the separation periods for divorce with consent to one year (previously two years) and without consent to two years (previously five years). It also removed "desertion" as a ground.

### **Adoptions**

The Registrar General for Scotland registers adoptions under the Adoption of Children (Scotland) Act 1930.

### **Civil Partnerships, and Dissolutions of Civil Partnerships**

The Civil Partnership Act 2004, which applies throughout the UK, came into force on 5 December 2005. The Act enables same-sex couples aged 16 and over to obtain legal recognition of their relationship. Figures quoted in these tables cover all civil partnerships which were registered as having taken place in Scotland, regardless of the usual residence of the people involved.

Dissolutions of civil partnerships are counted on the basis of the date on which each decree was granted. The first dissolution of a civil partnership in Scotland was granted in April 2007.