Health at a Glance 2021: OECD Indicators

Highlights for Japan


COVID-19 vaccination has greatly accelerated; mental health remains a problem

As of November 1, more than 1.7 million COVID-19 infections and more than 18 000 deaths from the virus had been recorded.

All-cause mortality in 2020 and the first six months of 2021 rose by 4.9% compared with the 2015-2019 average.

Life expectancy in Japan was highest across OECD countries, at 84.7 years. Japan was one of only six OECD countries where life expectancy did not decline in 2020.

Older populations have been hit hard: in Japan, 85% of COVID-19 deaths have occurred among people aged 60+, and nearly three-fifths occurred among people aged 80 and older.

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of the Japanese population has been fully vaccinated against COVID-19, compared to 65% across the OECD on average (as of November 1).

Japan had the tenth-highest vaccination rate across 37 OECD countries as of November 1, a significant improvement from the fifth-lowest rate at the beginning of July.

The prevalence of some risk behaviours declined: in Japan, smoking rates among older adults declined during the pandemic, possibly over concerns about worse health outcomes.

The COVID-19 crisis has had a significant and negative impact on population mental health. In Japan, the prevalence of depression more than doubled to 17% in early 2020, compared with the previous year.

Cumulative excess mortality compared to reported COVID-19 deaths per million population, January 2020 to end June 2021

Excess deaths per 1 million population
COVID-19 deaths per 1 million population

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Mexico Poland Japan Slovak Republic Ireland United States Hungary Colombia Slovenia Italy China Portugal OECD average Lithuania Spain United Kingdom Germany Estonia Netherlands France Belgium Austria Italy Canada Switzerland Germany Luxembourg Japan Israel Sweden Finland Australia Denmark Iceland Korea Norway
Health status is high in Japan, with the highest life expectancy and oldest population across all OECD countries.

**Life expectancy** (2019 or nearest year)
- Years of life at birth

**Avoidable mortality** (2019 or nearest year)
- Deaths per 100 000 population (age-standardised)

**Population ageing** (2019 or nearest year)
- % of population 65 and older

**Self-rated health** (2019 or nearest year)
- Population in poor health (% population 15+)

Smoking and alcohol consumption remain close to the OECD average, though overweight/obesity is the lowest in the OECD.

**Smoking** (2019 or nearest year)
- Daily smokers (% population 15+)

**Alcohol** (2019 or nearest year)
- Litres consumed per capita (population 15+)

**Overweight/obese** (2019 or nearest year)
- Population with BMI>=25 (% population 15+)

**Air pollution** (2019 or nearest year)
- Deaths due to ambient particulate matter pollution (per 100 000 population)

Population coverage is high, with high satisfaction and strong financial protection.

**Population coverage, eligibility** (2019 or nearest year)
- Population eligible for core services (% population)

**Financial protection** (2019 or nearest year)
- Expenditure covered by compulsory prepayment (% total expenditure)

**Population coverage, satisfaction** (2019 or nearest year)
- Population satisfied with availability of quality health care (% population)

Major indicators of quality are mixed, with relatively low antibiotics prescribing but higher-than-average 30-day mortality following acute myocardial infarction and low breast cancer screening rates.

**Safe primary care** (2019 or nearest year)
- Antibiotics prescribed (defined daily dose per 1 000 people)

**Effective preventive care** (2019 or nearest year)
- Mammography screening within the past two years (% of women 50+)

**Effective secondary care** (2019 or nearest year)
- 30-day mortality following AMI (per 100 000 people, age-sex standardised)

Resources for health are somewhat above the OECD average, with higher-than-average health and long-term care spending.

**Health spending** (2019 or nearest year)
- % GDP

**Long-term care spending** (2019 or nearest year)
- % GDP

**Hospital beds** (2019 or nearest year)
- Per 1 000 population

**Doctors** (2019 or nearest year)
- Practicing physicians (per 1 000 population)

**Nurses** (2019 or nearest year)
- Practicing nurses (per 1 000 population)