
Life expectancy fell by a year in the UK in 2020; COVID-19 vaccinations have plateaued despite a strong start

As of November 1, more than 9.1 million COVID-19 infections and over 140 000 deaths from the virus had been recorded.

All-cause mortality in 2020 and the first six months of 2021 rose by 11.7% compared with the 2015-2019 average.

The pandemic caused health spending as a share of GDP to rise sharply, from 10.2% in 2019 to 12.8% in 2020 (compared to an average 0.9 percentage point increase in the OECD area).

The UK had the fifth-highest vaccination rate across 37 OECD countries on July 1, but had fallen to 17th-highest as of November 1.

The COVID-19 crisis has had a significant and negative impact on population mental health. The prevalence of depression more than doubled to 21% in early 2021, compared with 2019.

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

Life expectancy fell by a full year during the pandemic, from 81.4 years in 2019 to 80.4 years in 2020 (compared to an average reduction of 0.6 years across OECD countries).

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Health at a Glance 2021: How does the United Kingdom compare?

Overall health status in the United Kingdom is close to the OECD average

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+)

Overweight/obesity and alcohol consumption are higher than the OECD average

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)

The United Kingdom performs well on many key indicators of care quality, though avoidable hospital admissions could be further reduced

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

Effective primary care (2019 or nearest year)
Avoidable COPD admissions (per 100 000 people, age-sex standardised)

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)

Health and long-term care spending are above average, though hospital beds and the number of doctors and nurses are slightly below the OECD average

Health spending (2019 or nearest year)
% of GDP

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