

## Metadata – COVID-19 deaths

<b>Description</b>	Number of COVID-19 deaths (confirmed or suspected) in Belgium Crude mortality rate due to COVID-19 per million of inhabitants in Belgium Age-specific mortality rates due to COVID-19 per million inhabitants Crude mortality rate due to COVID-19 per million of inhabitants in selected countries
<b>Rationale</b>	COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) has currently a strong impact on, not only the public health situation of Belgium, but on most aspects on the lives of its citizens. Monitoring COVID-19 deaths is a key task in order to control and prevent the spread of the disease.
<b>Primary Data source</b>	All hospitals of Belgium are reporting everyday deaths occurring in their institutions directly to Sciensano. Nursing homes and other long-term care facilities (LTCF) are reporting deaths among their residents for their regional authority. General practitioners report to their regional authority deaths occurring at home. Information from the different sources are compiled by Sciensano. International data were extracted from ECDC
<b>Indicator source</b>	COVID-19 mortality database, Sciensano International COVID-19 mortality rates during the first wave are based on the analysis performed in the ULB-VUB report on mortality (1).
<b>Periodicity</b>	The COVID-19 mortality database is updated daily. The extraction of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> of February 2021 was used in the redaction of this page.
<b>Calculation, technical definitions and limitations</b>	An ad-hoc registration in nearly real-time of COVID-19 mortality was set up in emergency. Deaths in hospitals are registered through the Hospital Surve Capacity survey managed by Sciensano. Deaths outside the hospital (in nursing homes, other institutions, at home, and other places) are notified to the regional authorities via specific tools. Sciensano is in charge of compiling the information from the different data sources. COVID-19 deaths can only be fully reported by place of death for data availability reason (place of residence was not available for hospital deaths until the 24/04). COVID-19 deaths diagnosed with PCR test, with CT-scan and suspected cases are included. The crude mortality rate is computed as the number of COVID-19 deaths divided by the Belgian population on the 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2020. The age-specific mortality rates are computed as the number of COVID-19 deaths in an age group divided by the number of people in this age group on the 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2020.
<b>International comparability</b>	a. Availability: Number of COVID-19 deaths are available on different platforms (ECDC, WHO) for most countries in the world. b. Comparability: Comparability of COVID-19 mortality is seriously hampered by methodological differences in the counting of COVID-19 deaths. International comparisons of COVID-19 mortality should be avoided.

1. Lagasse R, Deboosere P. Évaluation épidémiologique de l'impact du Covid-19 en Belgique à la date du 15 juillet 2020 - Page 48 [Internet]. Brussels; 2020 Aug [cited 2020 Sep 21] p. 48. Available from: <https://esp.ulb.be/fr/les-actus/l-esp-dans-les-medias/rapport-d-analyse-de-l-epidemie-covid-19-n-ii>