

Statistics on Causes of Death 2017

In 2017, just over 92,000 people registered in Sweden died. Cardiovascular diseases together with tumours caused nearly 60 percent of all deaths. More than 1,900 deaths were defined as alcohol-related deaths. These deaths are most common among men.

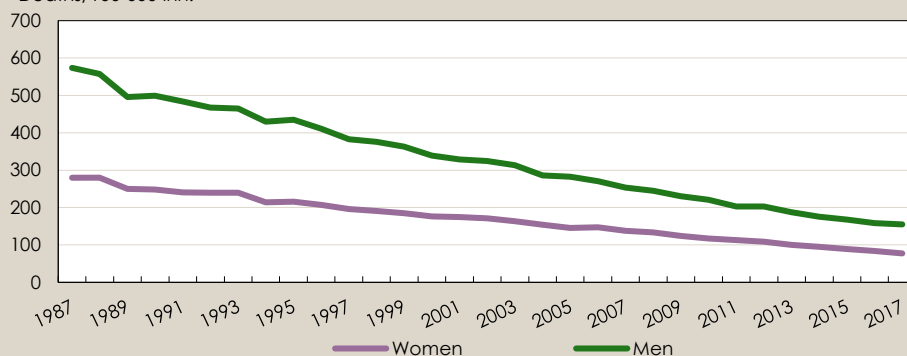
Cardiovascular diseases are most common but have decreased

Cardiovascular diseases, followed by tumours, are the groups that cause the most deaths. In 2017, cardiovascular diseases accounted for nearly 34 percent of deaths while tumours accounted for nearly 26 percent of all deaths.

Deaths due to cardiovascular diseases have fallen sharply over the past 30 years. In total, mortality rates, measured as deaths per 100,000 inhabitants, due to cardiovascular diseases have decreased by nearly 60 percent since 1987. A major part of this decrease is due to the decrease in ischemic heart diseases, which are the most common cause of death in cardiovascular disease. In total, the mortality rate due to ischemic heart diseases has decreased by more than 70 percent since 1987, from just over 400 to over 110 (per 100,000 inhabitants). Within the group of ischemic heart diseases, it is predominantly myocardial infarction that has decreased over the past 30 years. The number of myocardial attacks per 100,000 inhabitants has almost halved since 1987, while survival after a heart attack has increased significantly (1). Thus, the decrease in mortality is due to both the fact that fewer people are getting sick and that more of those who do survive.

Figure 1. Ischemic heart disease 1987-2017

Age standardized death rates
Deaths/100 000 inh.

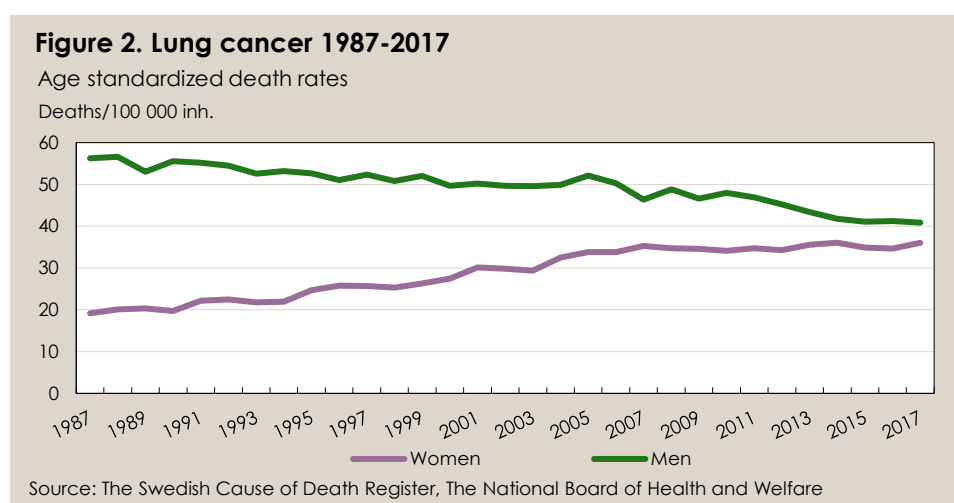


Source: The Swedish Cause of Death Register, The National Board of Health and Welfare

The other large group, tumours, has also decreased but not as much. Since 1987, the mortality rate for tumours has decreased by about 10 percent among women and 20 percent men.

One cancer where the mortality rate is higher today than in 1987 is lung cancer. This is due to a sharp increase among women where the mortality rate due to lung cancer was almost 90 percent higher in 2017 than in 1987. The largest part of the increase occurred in the 1990s and early 2000s. Over the past 10 years, death rates due to lung cancer have been at a relatively constant level. However, lung cancer as a cause of death among men has decreased. Compared to 1987, these deaths have decreased by almost 30 percent.

Both the 5- and 10-year survival rates in lung cancer have increased in both sexes since 1987. At the same time, the incidence, number of new cases among 100,000 inhabitants, increased among women and decreased among men (2), probably contributed to the increased mortality rate for women and reduced mortality rate for men.



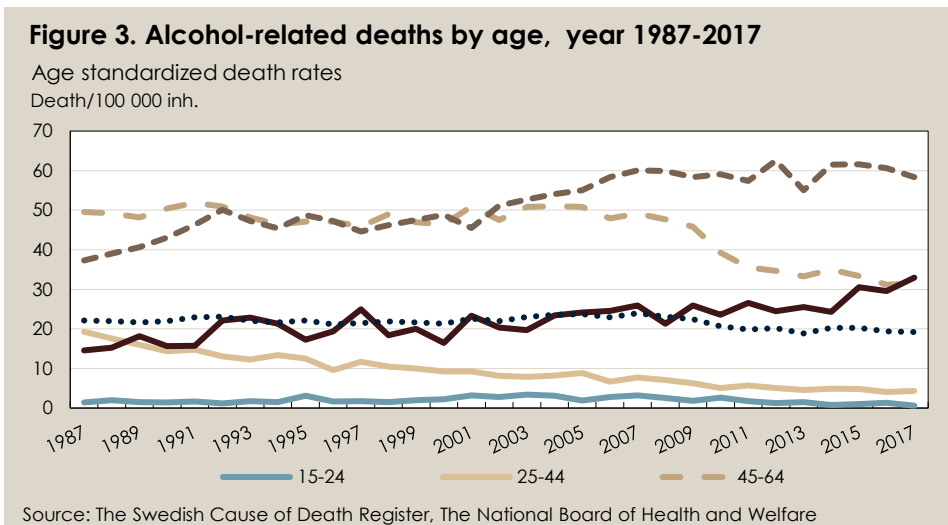
Reduced alcohol-related mortality among younger people

In the last 30 years, approximately 2,000 alcohol-related deaths have occurred in Sweden each year. These deaths are most common among men. During the 21st century, nearly 80 percent of these deaths occurred among men.

Among men and women, alcohol-related deaths in 2017 were higher than in 1987 in the older age groups, 65-79 and 80 years and older, respectively. In the age of 65-79, the increase occurred mainly through the mid-2000s. Since then, the mortality rate in this group has been at about the same level.

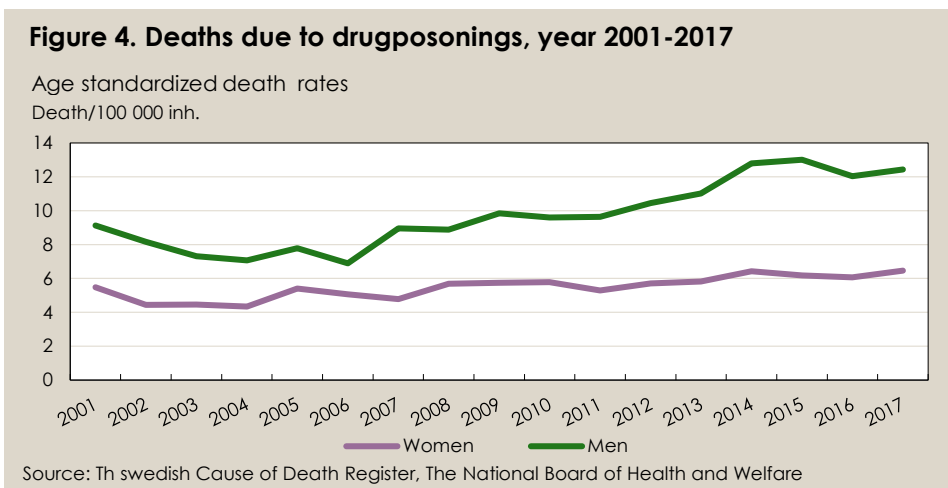
In the younger age groups, these deaths instead appear to have decreased. The biggest decrease is in the age group 25-44 years, where mortality rate has decreased by almost 80 percent since 1987.

In the age group 45-64 years, alcohol-related deaths decreased sharply around 2010. In 2017, the alcohol-related death rate was around 35 percent lower than in 2007 in this age group.



Drug poisonings most common among men

The number of deaths due to drug poisonings in 2017 was more than 630 among men and almost 330 among women. This is somewhat more than in 2016 but at about the same level as the last four years.



Among women, the poisoning was usually due to an act of intentional self-harm (suicide), while a majority of deaths among men were due to accidental poisoning (overdose). For a significant part of the deaths, in both sexes, there was insufficient information to determine the intent behind the act that led to the death.

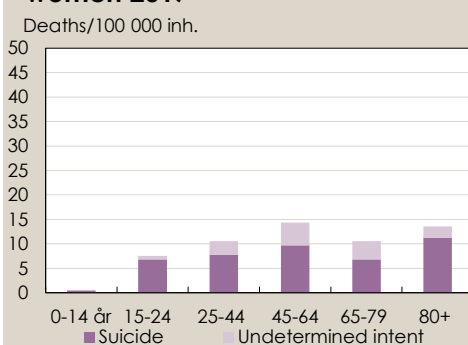
Suicide most common among men

In 2017, almost 350 women and more than 840 men died due to suicide. Among men, this is a little bit more than in 2016. In the same year, more than 130

women and more than 220 men died from events of undetermined intent, which are also sometimes included in suicide statistics.

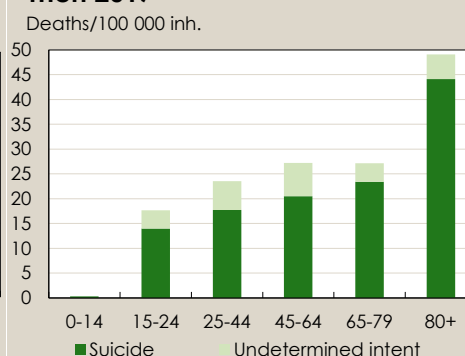
By the late 1980s and 1990s, suicide decreased clearly among both men and women. Even though the mortality rate due to suicide was lower in 2017 than in 2000, the decline in this period has been smaller than before. In the age group 15-24 years, the number of suicides has been about the same level as during the 1990s and 2000s.

Figure 5. Suicide and deaths due to events of undetermined intent, women 2017



Source: The Swedish Cause of Death Register, The National Board of Health and Welfare

Figure 6. Suicide and deaths due to events of undetermined intent, men 2017



Source: The Swedish Cause of Death Register, The National Board of Health and Welfare

References

1. Statistics database for myocardial infarction 1987-2016 [internet database]. Stockholm: National Board of Health and Welfare. [cited 2018-10-02]. <http://www.socialstyrelsen.se/statistik/statistikdatabas/hjartinfarkter>
2. Cancer i siffror 2018. Stockholm: The National Board of Health and Welfare and The Swedish Cancer Society; 2018

More information

You can find more tables, graphs and information in the following Excel file (in Swedish, but with an English list of terms):

www.socialstyrelsen.se/publikationer2018/2018-10-18/

If you want to use our statistical database: <http://www.socialstyrelsen.se/statistics/statisticaldatabase/causeofdeath>

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