

Statistics on Causes of Death 2018

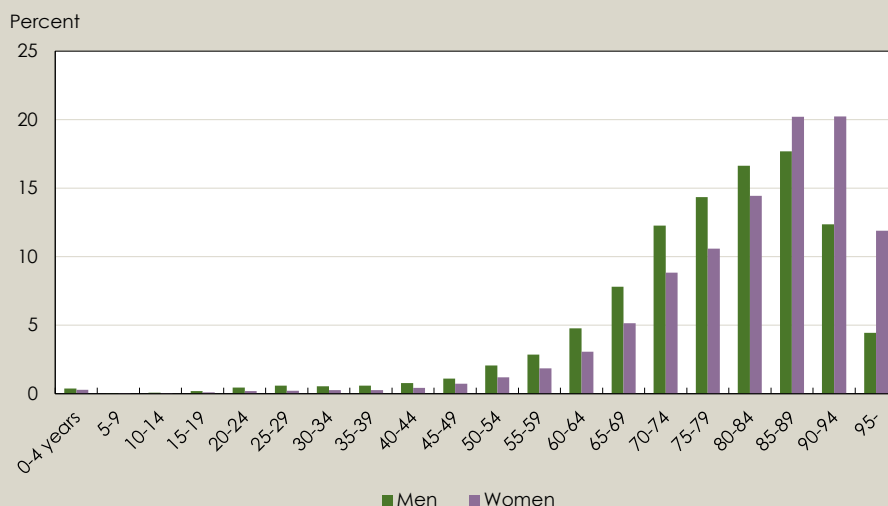
Almost 92,300 Swedish residents died in 2018. Of these, almost 46,800 were women and just under 45,500 were men. Although the death rate among men has decreased more than among women, there are still large differences in cause of death between the sexes. Cardiovascular disease caused the most deaths (almost 33 percent) followed by tumours (just over 25 percent) both of which were the most common causes of death among both men and women.

Women live longer than men but the difference is decreasing

Women generally live longer than men and death rates are also considerably lower among women than among men. In 2018, the average age at death was 82 for women and 77 for men (the average age at death should not be confused with life expectancy, which was 84 and 81 for women and men respectively, according to Statistics Sweden).

The difference is also evident in the age distribution among the deaths occurring in 2018. For example, just over 32 percent of deaths among women occurred in age 90 or older, while the same figure among men was just under 17 percent.

Figure 1. Deaths 2018 by age group and gender



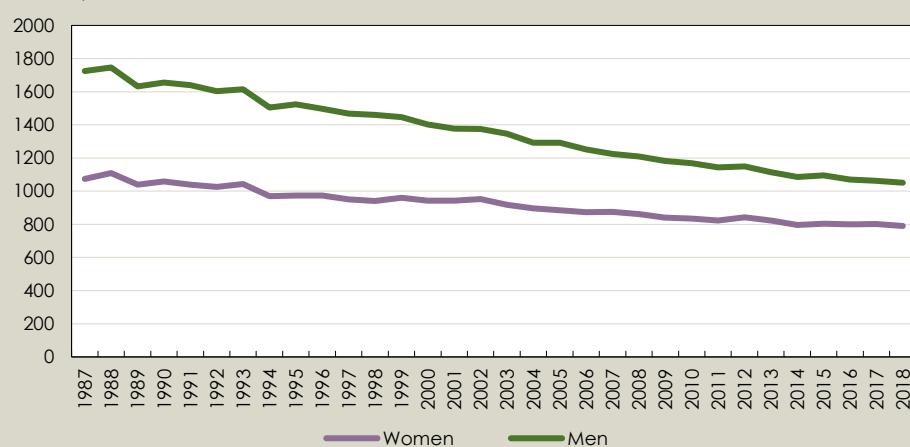
Source: Cause of Death Register, The National Board of Health and Welfare

More women than men die in Sweden, both in terms of number of deaths and numbers per 100,000 inhabitants. However, in age-adjusted figures, which take

into account the age distribution of men and women, the death rate is significantly higher among men than among women. This is despite the fact that the age-adjusted death rates have decreased more among men than among women in recent decades. In 1987, the age-adjusted death rates were 1725 per 100,000 among men and 1074 per 100,000 among women. The death rate among men was thus just over 60 percent higher than that among women. In 2018, the age-standardized death rates were just over 1050 per 100,000 among men and 790 per 100,000 among women, which means that men's death rates in 2018 were 33 percent higher among men than among women.

Figure 2. Age-standardised death rates 1987–2018 by gender

Deaths per 100,000

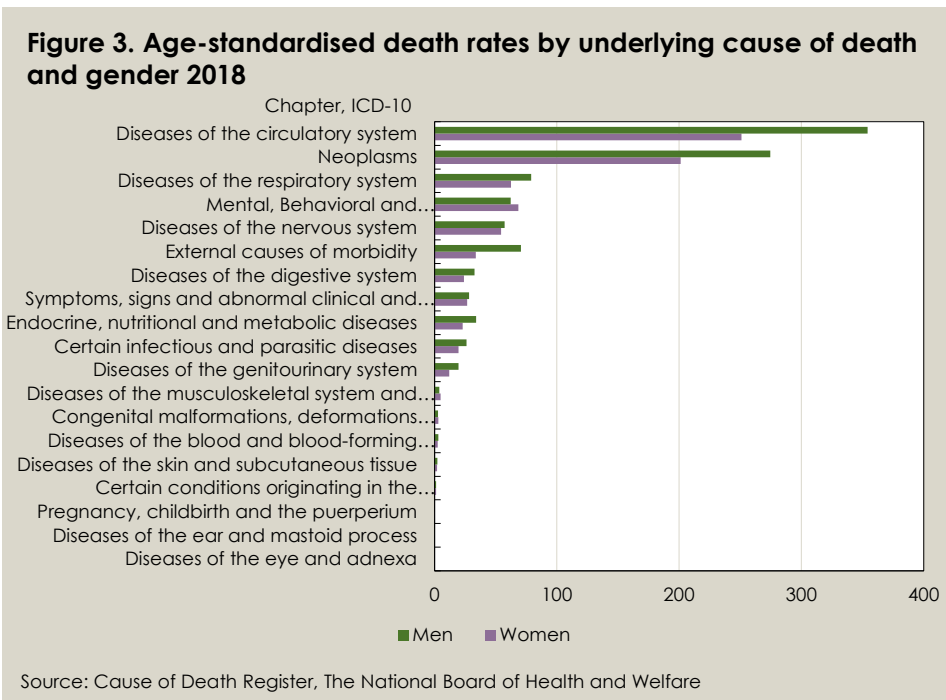


Source: Cause of Death Register, The National Board of Health and Welfare

Cardiovascular disease most common

Cardiovascular disease was the most common cause of death for both men and women. In 2018, this group constituted the underlying cause of death in nearly 33 percent of all deaths, both among women and men. The second most common was tumours, which accounted for almost 24 and just over 27 percent among women and men respectively.

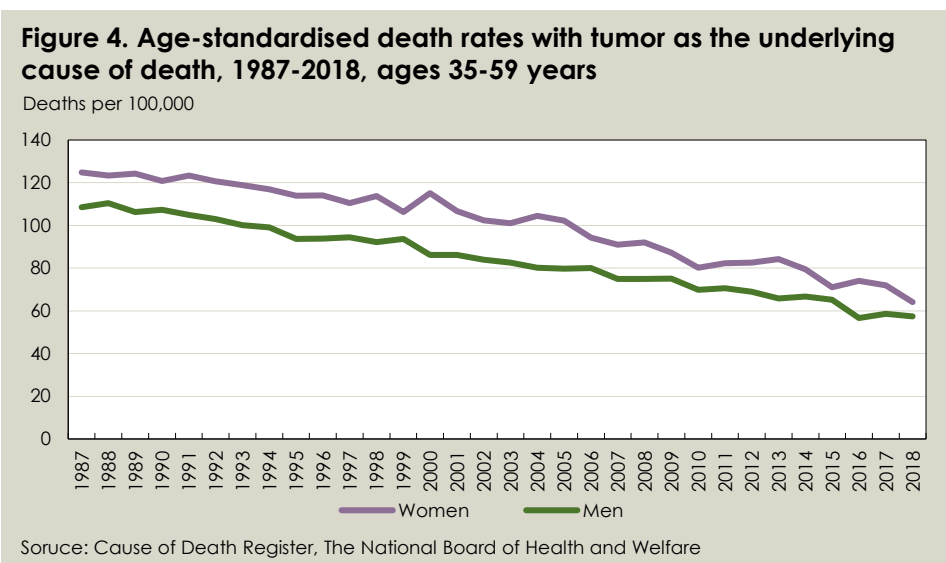
As shown in Figure 3, death rates are higher for men compared to women within almost all groups. A relatively large group of causes of death where death rates are higher among women is the group *Mental Illnesses and Behavioral Disorders*. The cause of death in this group is mainly due to different types of dementia.



Deaths due to tumour diseases in ages 35–59 more common among women

With a few exceptions, the death rate is higher for men than women regardless of cause of death category or age group.

One exception is tumour diseases in people aged 35–59, where the death rate is higher among women than among men. A reason for this is that cancers of breast and female genital organs are among the most common tumour diseases in this age group.



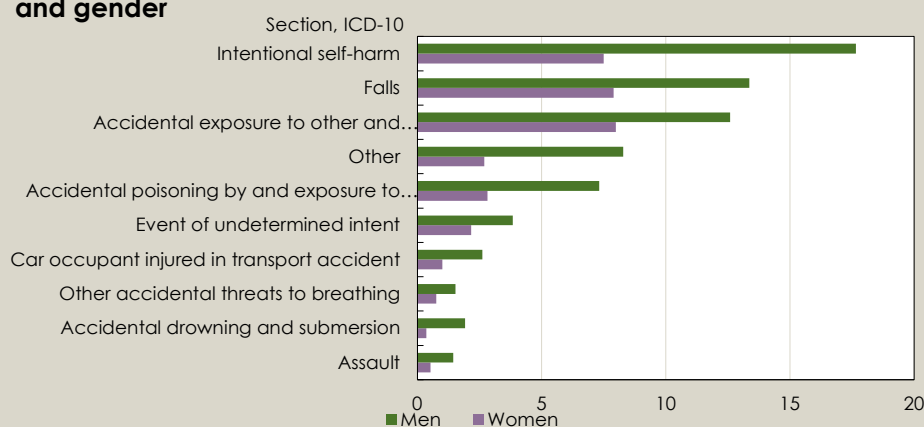
Another exception is mental illnesses and behavioural disorders, where the vast majority of deaths are caused by different types of dementia. Even after adjusting for age, taking into account that there are many more women of high age, deaths due to dementia are noticeably more common among women than among men.

Deaths due to external causes more than twice as common among men

External causes of illness and death is the category of deaths where the largest difference is seen between men and women. The death toll in this category in 2018 was more than twice as high among men as among women.

The largest difference is seen in deaths classified as *intentional self-destructive acts* (suicide). In 2018, nearly 1,270 deaths were classified as intentional self-destructive acts. Of these, just over 890 were men and just under 380 were women. In addition, more than 300 deaths were classified as *injury events with unclear intent*. In these cases, it has not been possible to determine the intent behind the death, that is, whether it is a deliberate self-destructive act, accident or abuse of another person. Suicide statistics sometimes include these deaths.

Figure 5. Age-standardised death rates by external cause of morbidity and gender



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

More information

You can find more tables, graphs and information here:

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