

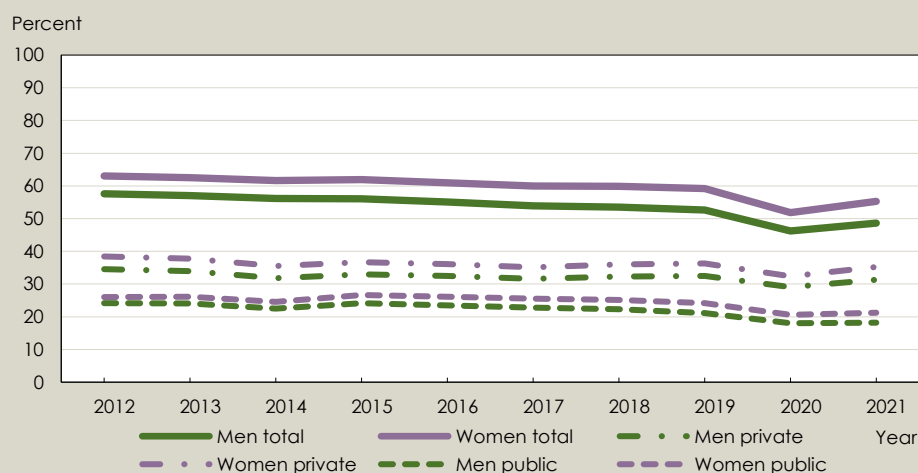
Statistics on Dental Health 2021

3.9 million individuals aged 24 years or older sought dental care in 2021. This is the second-lowest recorded number of individuals since the national registration of dental visits began in 2009. This decline should be considered in light of recommendations and restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Large geographical differences in dental health can be seen as well as in the proportion of individuals that sought dental care for a basic examination.

Increased number of visits

3,910,000 individuals from the adult population, 24 years or older, sought dental care in 2021. Of these, 1,810,000 were men and 2,100,000 were women. This is the second-lowest recorded number of individuals seeking care since the national registration of dental visits began in 2009. Compared to last year, the number of visits has increased. This might be explained by the global outbreak of COVID-19, which started 2020 and postponed, at least in part, dental healthcare visits into 2021. However, comparing 2021 to years prior to 2020, the year 2021 shows a stronger downward trend in number of dental healthcare visits. This might indicate a continuing effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on dental healthcare visits during 2021. Figure 1 shows the proportion of men and women who sought dental care during the period of 2012–2021, considering the size and age structure of the population. The graph also shows that women seek dental care to a greater extent than men, and that the difference between women and men is mostly consistent over time. Similar results are observed for public and private dental care, with a slightly stronger increase in 2021 for private care.

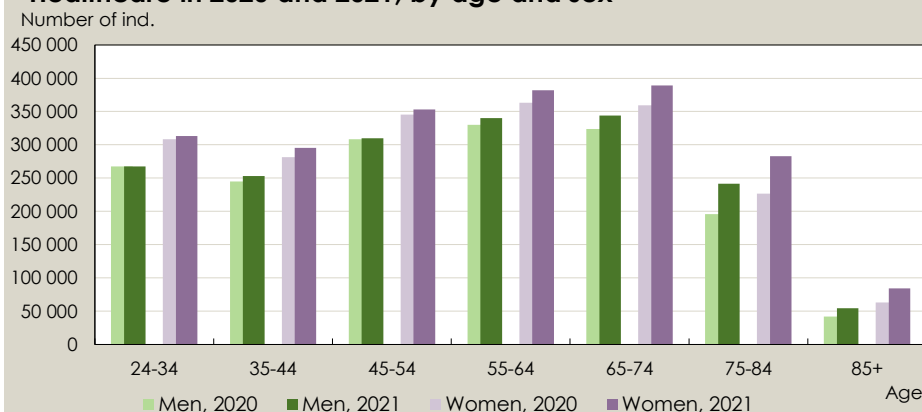
Figure 1. Proportion of individuals in population, 24 years of age or older, who have visited the Dental Healthcare 2012-2021, age-



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

The number of people who sought dental care during 2021 and 2020 is shown by age group in Figure 2. The increase in number of visits is observed for both men and women and for all age groups in the population.

Figure 2. Number of individuals who have visited The Dental Healthcare in 2020 and 2021, by age and sex



Source: The Swedish Dental Health Register, The National Board of Health and

The largest increase in number of visits for 2021 is observed in the age group 75–84 years old. This was also the age group that had fewer dental healthcare visits in 2020. There were 45,800 more men and 55,900 more women that visited dentists for healthcare in 2021 compared to the previous year. This corresponds to an increase of about 25% for both men and women. The largest relative change is found in the highest age group, with people older than 85 years. For this age group, the annual increase is 33.2% for women and 29.2% for men.

More information on the effects of the pandemic

The National Board of Health and Welfare has published a number of in-depth reports on the effects of pandemics on dental visits. You can download the reports here:

www.socialstyrelsen.se/coronavirus-covid-19/socialstyrelsens-roll-och-uppdrag/analys-och-utveckling/

Geographic differences in dental health

Figure 3 shows geographic differences in the proportion of having at least 20 remaining teeth for the 65–74 year age group, and the proportion of individuals 55–64 years old who sought dental healthcare for at least a basic examination. Municipalities with a low proportion of individuals 65–74 years old with at least 20 teeth are more often located in the northern parts of the country as well as in less densely populated areas. Municipalities with a low proportion of individuals 55–64 years old that sought at least a basic examination are also unequally dis-

tributed across the country in a similar pattern as the one described above. Generally, large differences were observed between municipalities in dental health and in performed basic examinations.

Figure 3. Proportion 65–74 years old with at least 20 remaining teeth who sought dental healthcare in 2019–2021 (left) and the proportion of 55–64 year olds who sought dental healthcare for at least a basic examination in 2019–2021 (right).

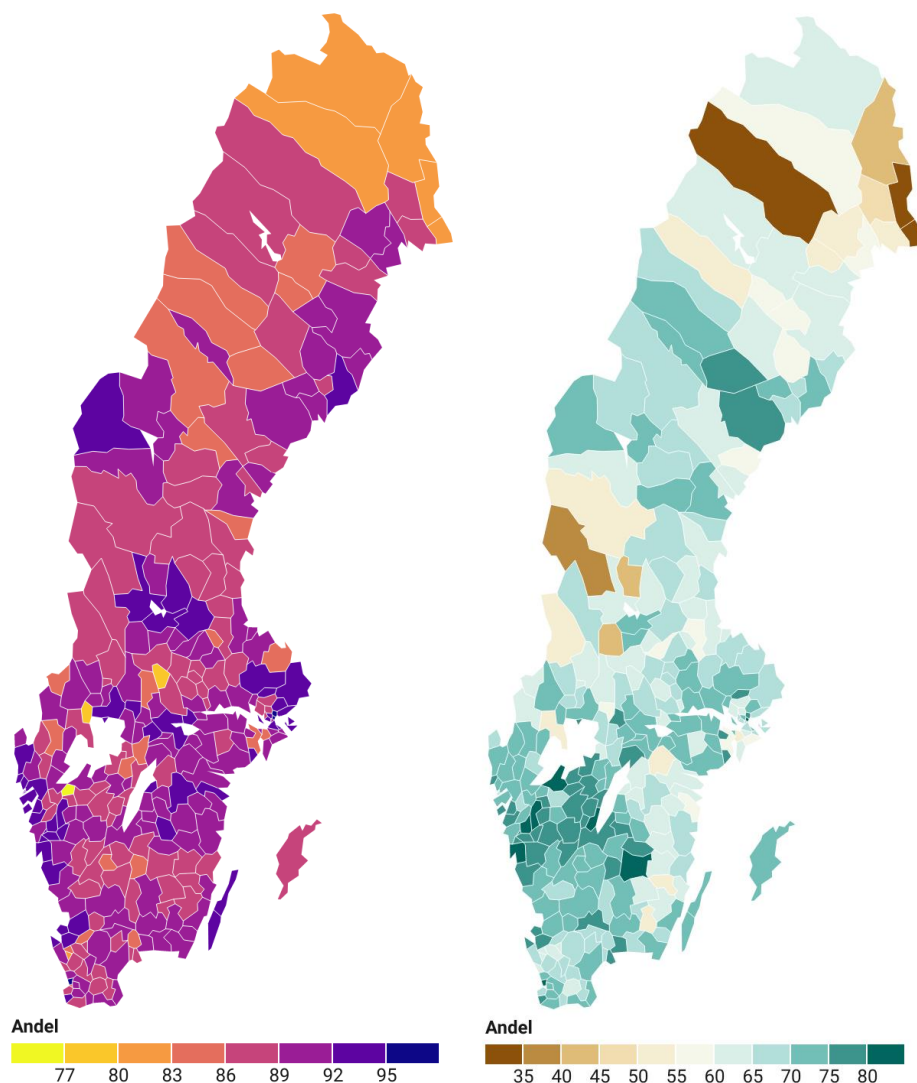


Table 1 shows a short list of municipalities with the lowest and highest proportion of 65–74 year olds with at least 20 remaining teeth reported within the last three years (2019–2021). This table also shows municipalities with the lowest and highest proportion of individuals aged 55–64 years who sought at least a basic dental health examination during the same time period.

Table 1. Municipalities with the lowest and highest proportion of individuals 65–74 years of age with at least 20 remaining teeth and 55–64 years of age that sought at least a basic dental health examination, 2019–2021

Proportion at least 20 remaining teeth		Proportion basic examination	
Lowest	Highest	Lowest	Highest
Grästorp: 76	Danderyd: 97	Jokkmokk: 31	Lomma: 85
Grums: 79	Täby: 95	Övertorneå: 33	Habo: 84
Ljusnarsberg: 79	Lidingö: 95	Haparanda: 34	Lidköping: 84
Pajala: 80	Lomma: 95	Älvdalen: 39	Kungsbacka: 83
Haparanda: 80	Waxholm: 94	Pajala: 41	Alingsås: 81
Kiruna: 80	Tjörn: 94	Vansbro: 41	Vetlanda: 81
Övertorneå: 81	Lerum: 94	Orsa: 43	Lerum: 81

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

Statistical terms related to dental health

According to Swedish law, the main objective for the dental health care system is good dental health and dental care on equal terms for the entire population.

A **remaining tooth** is a tooth that has a natural root, is partially erupted or has a visible tooth root. This also includes wisdom teeth. The number of remaining teeth is a rough but robust measure of dental health. Depending on whether the wisdom teeth are erupted or have visible tooth root, a person can have up to 32 remaining teeth. Chewing ability decreases drastically with less than 20 remaining teeth. Having at least 20 remaining teeth can therefore be interpreted as having sufficient chewing ability.

The proportion of individuals 65–74 years old with at least 20 remaining teeth varies between municipalities from 76%–97% percent (Table 1). Generally, stronger socioeconomic areas close to large cities show a high proportion of individuals with at least 20 remaining teeth. As described above, lower proportions were observed in the northern parts of the country and in less densely populated areas. The proportion that sought at least a basic examination varies between 31%–85%.

References

1. Shortened dental arches and oral function. Kayser AF 1981, *J Oral Rehabil*, Vol. 8, pp. 457–462.
2. The shortened dental arch concept and its implications for oral health care. Witter DJ, van Palenstein Helderma WH, Creugers NH, Kayser AF 1999, *Community Dent Oral Epidemiol*, Vol. 27, pp. 249–258.

More information

You can find more tables, graphs, and information here (in Swedish, but with English list of terms, select *Tillhörande dokument och bilagor*):
www.socialstyrelsen.se/statistik-och-data/statistik/alla-statistikamnen/tandhalsa

If you want to use our statistical database (in Swedish):
www.socialstyrelsen.se/statistik-och-data/statistik/statistikdatabasen

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