

Almost three deaths registered for every two births last year

There were almost 16,000 more deaths than births registered in Scotland in 2022, according to new figures released by National Records of Scotland.

The figures, in the report '[Births, Deaths and other Vital Events](#)' show there were 62,942 deaths but only 46,959 births across the year, continuing a trend of deaths outstripping births in Scotland which is likely to lead to a decreasing population without a rise in migration.

In the final quarter of 2022 the number of deaths was 9.3% higher than the five-year average for this time of year. The rise was across a range of causes, including an 8.7% rise in respiratory diseases.

Covid-19 was recorded as the underlying cause of 353 deaths during this quarter, while no deaths were registered where the underlying cause was adverse effects of a Covid-19 vaccine.

Meanwhile there were 4.9% fewer births than the quarter four average.

Julie Ramsay, Vital Events Statistician at National Records of Scotland, said: "The gap between deaths and births continues the period of negative natural change, where the number of deaths outnumbered the number of births, which began in 2015.

Having fewer births than deaths in a population is referred to as 'negative natural change' meaning that without external factors such as migration, the population will fall."

The report also showed some mixed-sex couples are choosing to have civil partnerships instead of marriage, since both options became available in June 2021. There were 141 registered civil partnerships for mixed-sex couples (83%) and 28 for same-sex couples in the final quarter of 2022. Marriage is far more popular with both same-sex and mixed-sex couples however, with 6,730 marriages over the same period, almost 3% above average, 265 of which were for same-sex couples.

The number of stillbirths (44) was 4.3% lower than the quarter four average and the number of infant deaths (42) was 3.7% below average.



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