



Society of Actuaries in Ireland  
Supporting Access and Inclusion



**Press Release: Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June**

**Ireland experienced c.1,100 excess deaths during the pandemic years of 2020 and 2021**

**Government-imposed restrictions stand out as one potentially significant factor for lower excess death in 2020**

Ireland experienced c.1,100 excess deaths during the pandemic years of 2020 and 2021 according to a report published today (June 4<sup>th</sup> 2024) by the Society of Actuaries in Ireland.

The analysis reveals “broadly no excess mortality in 2020; however, 2021 witnessed an increase in excess mortality, signalling a more significant impact on mortality patterns during the pandemic's second year. Among various possible contributing factors to the lower excess death in 2020, government-imposed restrictions stand out as one potentially significant factor.”

The report was authored by members of the Society’s Demography Committee and “examines the level of excess all-cause mortality experienced in Ireland during the Covid-19 pandemic, offering some insights beyond the tally of reported Covid-19 fatalities. Focusing specifically on the first two years of the pandemic, 2020 and 2021, it examines excess deaths as a metric in understanding the pandemic's impact.”

The authors emphasise that, “Whilst this report provides a numerical analysis of the deaths experienced in Ireland in 2020/2021, the Society is very much cognisant of the people behind these numbers and is mindful of those who suffered the loss of a loved one during this period.”

Excess mortality is defined as the difference between observed deaths and expected deaths.

The report points out that recent research on the impact of Covid-19 on mortality in Ireland has been contradictory and stresses that, “It is important to note that there is not one definitive approach to calculating excess mortality – mainly because, whilst observed deaths will ultimately be a matter of record (i.e. they are objective), the calculation of expected

deaths is dependent on the choice of methodology (i.e., it relies on professional judgement). This analysis is based on a methodology that relies on past experience as a benchmark for expected deaths. As presented in this report, different past periods for estimating expected deaths result in varying levels of excess mortality.”

**ENDS**

*Issued on behalf of the Society of Actuaries in Ireland by Setanta Communications:*

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***Society of Actuaries in Ireland***

*The Society of Actuaries in Ireland is the professional body for actuaries practising in Ireland. Actuaries provide advice on and relevant solutions for financial, business and societal issues involving uncertain future events. Most of the Society's members work in the financial services industry, and members of the profession hold statutory or regulated roles relating to the financial management of pension schemes and insurance companies. The Society seeks to make an impartial contribution to public debate on social policy and public interest matters where an actuarial perspective can add value.*