

Single Integrated Metadata Structure (SIMS)

Country: Greece

Compiling agency: ELSTAT

Domain name: Causes of Death (CoD)

ELSTAT metadata

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1. Contact

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2. Introduction

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The survey of Causes of Death is exhaustive. Sources of information are administrative records (Death Certificates) provided by Registries from all around the country and forensic reports in cases of violent or sudden deaths.

3. Metadata update

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3.1 Metadata last certified	29/01/2021
3.2 Metadata last posted	29/01/2021
3.3 Metadata last updated	29/01/2021

4. Statistical presentation

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4.1 Data description

Data on causes of death (CoD) provide information on mortality patterns and form a major element of public health information.

CoD data refer to the underlying cause which - according to the World Health Organization (WHO) - is "the disease or injury which initiated the train of morbid events leading directly to death, or the circumstances of the accident or violence which produced the fatal injury".

Causes of death are classified by the 65 causes of the "European shortlist" of causes of death. This shortlist is based on the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD).

CoD data are derived from death certificates. The medical certification of death is an obligation in all Member States. Countries code the information of cause of death provided in the medical certificate into ICD codes according to the rules specified in the ICD.

Other key variables are: age, sex, marital status, citizenship, place of birth, place of residence, place of incident (region, regional unity, municipality), date of death, place of death, education level, occupation, type of violent death (accident, road accident, suicide, homicide) etc. Age of mother, parity, birth weight and gestational age are also available for stillbirths (crown-heel length is not collected), whereas, they are not currently available for neonatal deaths.

4.2 Classification system

ELSTAT uses the 4-digit ICD-10 Classification of Diseases, 2008 edition from 2014 onwards. Former time series are available in the 4-digit ICD-09 Classification of Diseases. Data for the years 2014-2016 are available in both ICD-09 and ICD-10. From 2017 onwards data will be available only in ICD-10.

Other relevant classifications:

Geographical classification: 6-digit Geographical Division of the country "KAPODISTRIAS 2009" and from 2014 onwards, 8-digit Geographical Division of the country "KALLIKRATIS". Place /Country of Birth are available from 2014 onwards. Country of Residence is disaggregated as Greece/Abroad since 2013 while, from 2014 onwards, a 3-digit Country code is used.

Classification of Occupations: 2-digit STEP '92 and from 2014 onwards, 2-digit ISCO08

Classification of education: Available from 2014 onwards, ISCED
Classification of religion: National classification
Classification of citizenship: 2-digit National classification

4.3 Coverage – sector

Public Health

In Greece CoD pertain to Population and Migration Statistics Section

4.4 Statistical concepts and definitions

According to Regulation (EU) No 328/2011:

'Death' means the permanent disappearance of all evidence of life at any time after live birth has taken place (post-natal cessation of vital functions without capability of resuscitation). This definition excludes stillbirths.

'Stillbirth' means foetal death, namely death prior to the complete expulsion or extraction from its mother of a product of conception, irrespective of the duration of pregnancy. Death is indicated by the fact that after such separation from its mother the foetus does not breathe or show any other evidence of life, such as beating of the heart, pulsation of the umbilical cord, or definite movement of voluntary muscles.

'Gestational age' means the duration of gestation, measured from the first day of the last normal menstrual period. Gestational age is expressed in completed days or completed weeks.

'Neonatal death' means the death occurring among live births during the first 28 completed days of life (days 0-27).

'Parity' means the number of previous live births or stillbirths (0, 1, 2, 3 or more previous live births or stillbirths).

'Other deaths' means the deaths occurring after the neonatal death period from the 28th completed day of life onwards.

'Underlying cause of death' means the disease or injury which initiated the train of morbid events leading directly to death, or the circumstances of the accident or violence which produced the fatal injury.

'Resident' means 'usual resident' in the place where a person normally spends the daily period of rest, regardless of temporary absences for purposes of recreation, holidays, visits to friends and relatives, business, medical treatment or religious pilgrimage. The following persons alone shall be considered to be usual residents of the geographical area in question: (i) those who have lived in their place of usual residence for a continuous period of at least 12 months before the reference date; or (ii) those who arrived in their place of usual residence during the 12 months before the reference date with the intention of staying there for at least 1 year. Where the circumstances described in point (i) or (ii) cannot be established, 'usual residence' shall mean the place of legal or registered residence.

'Neonatal mortality' The ratio of deaths of infants under the age of 28 days during the reference year to the number of live births in the same year. The ratio is expressed per 1,000 live births.

'Infant mortality' The ratio of deaths of infants under one year of age during the reporting year to the number of live births in the same year. The ratio is expressed per 1,000 live births.

'Perinatal mortality' The ratio of deaths of infants under the age of one week and stillbirths during the reference year to the number of births (stillbirths included) in the same year. The ratio is expressed per 1,000 births.

4.5 Statistical unit
The statistical unit is the deceased person. The reporting unit is the certifier. This is in most cases a physician. In cases of violent or sudden deaths, the certification is made by forensic physicians.
4.6 Statistical population
The deceased persons and stillbirths within the Hellenic territorial borders. In particular, neonatal of non-resident mothers are considered to be residents, non-residents are included in national statistics while residents dying abroad are not included. Moreover, cases of refugees/ migrants who have drowned in the Hellenic territorial waters or have died while cross-boarding before being registered in the country, are included in the datasets sent to Eurostat and WHO according to the scope of Causes of death statistics, as specified in the Article 1 of the Regulation (EU) No 328/2011 on statistics on causes of death that is: "European statistics in the domain of 'causes of death' shall concern all registered deaths and stillbirths occurring in each Member State, distinguishing residents and non-residents." On the contrary, these cases are excluded from the national CoD data and from the Hellenic Population Figures in accordance with guidelines from Unit F2 (Population & Migration).
4.7 Reference area
At national level: Total Geographical country. Geographical level of data analysis: Municipality.
4.8 Coverage - Time
Data are available since 1956
4.9 Base period
Non applicable (n.a.)

5. Unit of measure	Top
The data are published in absolute numbers (number of individuals).	

6. Reference Period	Top
Data refer to the calendar year (i.e. all deaths/stillbirths occurring during the year).	

7. Institutional Mandate	Top
7.1 Legal acts and other agreements	
<p>The legal framework concerning the organization and operation of ELSTAT consists of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Law 3832/2010 (Government Gazette No 38, Issue A): “Hellenic Statistical System Establishment of the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) as an Independent Authority”, as amended.➤ Regulation on the Operation and Administration of the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT), 2012, (Government Gazette No 2390, Issue B, 28-8-2012).➤ Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council, on the European statistics (Official Journal of the European Union L 87/164).➤ Regulation (EU) No 1260/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European demographic statistics (Official Journal of the European Union L 330/39).➤ Article 14 of the Law 3470/2006 (Government Gazette No 132, Issue A): “National Export Council, tax regulations and other provisions”.➤ Article 3, paragraph 1c, of the Law 3448/2006 (Government Gazette No 57, Issue A): “For the further	

use of information coming from the public sector and the settlement of matters falling within the responsibility of the Ministry of Interior, Public Administration and Decentralization”.

- European Statistics Code of Practice, adopted by the Statistical Programme Committee on 24 February 2005 and promulgated in the Commission Recommendation of 25 May 2005 on the independence, integrity and accountability of the national and Community statistical Authorities, after its revision, which was adopted on 28 September 2011 by the European Statistical System Committee.
- Presidential Decree 73/2019 (Government Gazette No 114, Issue A/4-7-2019): “Organization of the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT)”.
- Articles 4, 8,9,10,12 , 13, 14, 15 and 16 of the Law 2392/1996 (Government Gazette No 60, Issue A):”Access of the General Secretariat of the National Statistical Service of Greece to administrative sources and administrative files, Statistical Confidentiality Committee, settlement of matters concerning the conduct of censuses and statistical works, as well as of matters of the General Secretariat of the National Statistical Service of Greece”.
- Law 344/76 (Government Gazette 143/Issue A) “Law on Birth and Death Certificates” and Law 4144/2013 “Law combating delinquency in Social Security” which imposes all amendments.
- Countries submitted data to Eurostat on the basis of a gentleman's agreement established in the framework Eurostat's Working Group on “Public Health Statistics” until data with reference year 2010. The first data submitted according to the Regulation (EU) No 328/2011 are data with reference year 2011.
- A Regulation on Community statistics on public health and health and safety at work (EC) No 1338/2008 was signed by the European Parliament and the Council on 16 December 2008. This Regulation is the framework of the data collection on the domain.
- Within the context of this framework Regulation, a Regulation on Community statistics on public health and health and safety at work, as regards statistics on causes of death (EU) No 328/2011 was signed by the European Parliament and the Council on 5 April 2011.

7.2 Data sharing

Data are sent to International organizations (Eurostat, WHO etc.). Common specifications with the World Health Organization were used in the data collection up to 2010. In addition, Eurostat asks for NUTS level 2. From 2011 onwards, Eurostat changed the specifications to take into account the data collected through the Regulation (EU) No 328/2011.

8. Confidentiality

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8.1 Confidentiality policy

Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 on European statistics (recital 24 and Article 20(4)) of 11 March 2009 (OJ L 87, p. 164), stipulates the need to establish common principles and guidelines ensuring the confidentiality of data used for the production of European statistics and the access to those confidential data with due account for technical developments and the requirements of users in a democratic society.

The issues concerning the observance of statistical confidentiality by ELSTAT are regulated by articles 6,7 and 8 of the Law 3832/2010, as amended by article 90 paragraph 8 of the Law 3842/2010 and by article 10 of the Law 3899/2010, as well as by article 8 of the Law 2392/1996, which was brought back into force, in accordance with article 90 paragraph 8 of the Law 3842/2010.

Furthermore, ELSTAT disseminates the statistics in compliance with the statistical principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice and in particular with the principle of statistical confidentiality.

8.2 Confidentiality - data treatment

- ELSTAT protects and does not disseminate data it has obtained, or it has access to, which enable the direct or indirect identification of the statistical units that have provided them by the disclosure of Individual information directly received for statistical purposes or indirectly supplied from administrative or other sources. ELSTAT takes all appropriate preventive measures so as to render impossible the identification of individual statistical units by technical or other means that might reasonably be used by a third party. Statistical data that could potentially enable the identification of the statistical unit are disseminated by ELSTAT if and only if:
- a) These data have been treated, as it is specifically set out in the Regulation on Statistical Obligations of the agencies of the Hellenic Statistical System (ELSS), in such a way that their dissemination does not prejudice statistical confidentiality or
 - b) The statistical unit has given its consent, without any reservations, for the disclosure of data.
- The confidential data that are transmitted by ELSS agencies to ELSTAT are used exclusively for statistical purposes and the only persons who have the right to have access to these data are the personnel engaged in this task and appointed by an act of the President of ELSTAT.
- ELSTAT may grant researchers conducting statistical analyses for scientific purposes access to data that enable the indirect identification of the statistical units concerned. The access is granted provided the following conditions are satisfied: a) an appropriate request together with a detailed research proposal in conformity with current scientific standards have been submitted; b) the research proposal indicates in sufficient detail the set of data to be accessed, the methods of analyzing them, and the time needed for the research; c) a contract specifying the conditions for access, the obligations of the researchers, the measures for respecting the confidentiality of statistical data and the sanctions in case of breach of these obligations has been signed by the individual researcher, by his/her institution, or by the organization commissioning the research, as the case may be, and by ELSTAT.
- Issues referring to the observance of statistical confidentiality are examined by the Statistical Confidentiality Committee (SCC) operating in ELSTAT. The responsibilities of this Committee are to make recommendations to the President of ELSTAT on:
- the level of detail at which statistical data can be disseminated, so as the identification, either directly or indirectly, of the surveyed statistical unit is not possible;
 - the anonymization criteria for the microdata provided to users;
 - the granting to researchers access to confidential data for scientific purposes.
- The staff of ELSTAT, under any employment status, as well as the temporary survey workers who are employed for the collection of statistical data in statistical surveys conducted by ELSTAT, who acquire access by any means to confidential data, are bound by the principle of confidentiality and must use these data exclusively for the statistical purposes of ELSTAT. After the termination of their term of office, they are not allowed to use these data for any purpose.
- Violation of data confidentiality and/or statistical confidentiality by any civil servant or employee of ELSTAT constitutes the disciplinary offence of violation of duty and may be punished with the penalty of final dismissal.
- ELSTAT, by its decision, may impose a penalty amounting from ten thousand (10,000) up to two hundred thousand (200,000) euros to anyone who violates the confidentiality of data and/or statistical confidentiality. The penalty is always imposed after the hearing of the defense of the person liable for the breach, depending on the gravity and the repercussions of the violation. Any relapse constitutes an aggravating factor for the assessment of the administrative sanction.

9. Release policy Top
9.1 Release calendar
Annual data are announced two years after the reference year at the latest.
9.2 Release calendar access
https://www.statistics.gr/documents/20181/16784295/elstat_press_releases_calendar_2020_en.pdf/pdf/99586a5a-5d15-8899-5e43-fe4645890dc9?t=1567161159051 https://www.statistics.gr/documents/20181/16784295/elstat_press_releases_calendar_2021_en.pdf/14c54532-8b14-8fce-3409-2f095f17979f
9.3 User access
<p>Data are available simultaneously to all interested parties in accordance with the calendar announcements through press releases https://www.statistics.gr/en/calendar#112019 and posting tables https://www.statistics.gr/en/statistics/pop, section: Demography> Years 2000-2016: Deaths-Causes of death (ICD-9)/ Years 2014-2018: Deaths-Causes of death (ICD-10). Equal access of users to the data is covered by Eurostat's European Statistics Code of Practice respecting professional independence and in an objective, professional and transparent manner by which all users are treated with equality. There is no access to the data by any user before the announcement.</p>

10. Frequency of dissemination Top
Annually.

11. Dissemination format Top
11.1 Press release
Annual data are announced two years after the reference year at the latest. The last available press release concerns the CoD of 2014 while the 2018 CoD press release is scheduled for February 3,2021.
11.2 Publications
n.a.
11.3 Online database
https://www.statistics.gr/en/statistics/pop (Deaths-Causes of death ICD-9 & ICD-10) If further disaggregation is needed, please refer to: data.dissem@statistics.gr
11.3.1 Data tables-consultations
n.a.
11.4 Microdata access
Microdata are not disseminated at the moment. Nevertheless, there is an ongoing process of developing the dissemination format of Public Use Files and Scientific Use Files.
11.5 Other
<p>Users can have access to ELSTAT's digital library at: http://dlib.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/. Moreover, tables can be found at: https://www.statistics.gr/en/statistics/pop, section: Demography> Years 2000-2016: Deaths-Causes of death (ICD-9)/ Years 2014-2018: Deaths-Causes of death (ICD-10), as well as at Eurostat's website: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database (health > Causes of Death). Finally, there is the possibility of providing data (usually via e-mail) upon request to the Department of Data Provision. In that case, demands can be made online at ELSTAT's website:</p>

<https://www.statistics.gr/en/statistical-data-request> or can be addressed to the following e-mails: data.dissem@statistics.gr and data.supply@statistics.gr

11.5.1 Metadata consultations

n.a.

12. Accessibility of documentation

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12.1 Documentation on methodology

Documents for CoD are available in CIRCABC, Causes of Death section.

Information (tables, methodology) is also available on the website of ELSTAT

(<http://www.statistics.gr/en/home/>) following the path: Statistics/ Population and Social Conditions.

12.1.1 Metadata completeness-rate

Every year fully completed and updated metadata are transmitted to Eurostat along with the data.

12.2 Quality documentation

The quality of CoD data is subject to the national certification and coding procedures. Greece follows the standards and rules specified in the ICD while all rational and numeral checks safeguarding quality are being performed.

The overall procedures for the collection of CoD data are relatively homogenous between European countries (medical certification of cause of death, use of ICD). However, national differences in interpretation and use of ICD rules exist and as a result important comparability issues remain.

13. Quality management

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13.1 Quality assurance

The causes of death data are based on a Regulation, which defines scope, definitions of variables and characteristics of the data.

Comparative checks are being performed.

ELSTAT's Quality Policy and Quality Guidelines are applied:

<https://www.statistics.gr/en/quality-asurance-framework>

13.2 Quality assessment

Due to legal obligations and ELSTAT's quality checks, errors in CoD are very rare and results are considered to be of high accuracy. There is a longtime experience in the compilation of CoD statistics. Furthermore, concepts, definitions and methodology follow European and international standards and guidelines.

14. Relevance

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14.1 User Needs

The main data users of Hellenic data are researchers (university community, international organizations, research centers etc.), Ministries and journalists. User requirements are mainly time series for different variables.

14.2 User Satisfaction

The Department of Statistical Information and Dissemination of ELSTAT conducts a survey on user satisfaction, at: <http://www.statistics.gr/en/user-satisfaction-survey>

User satisfaction survey report for the year 2018 can be found at:

https://www.statistics.gr/documents/20181/300673/ELSTAT_UserSatisfactionSurvey_2018_EN.pdf/a1e7c122-413f-9b42-b077-0d4c249e64e7?t=1579011294872

14.3 Completeness

Data cover the 95% of the users' requirements. All the obligations arising from the Regulations (EC) No 1338/2008 and (EU) No 328/2011 are met.

15. Accuracy and reliability

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15.1 Overall accuracy

Data are compiled by reliable administrative sources and forensic physicians.

15.2 Sampling error

Non applicable because the survey is exhaustive.

15.3 Non-sampling error

Due to the nature of the data (administrative sources) non-sampling errors that may occur relate only to measurement errors and processing errors. The detection is achieved through detailed checks both from administrative sources and from ELSTAT. We consider that there are no non-sampling errors because in general, all registrars disseminate the data, coders are professionals and relevant data have primarily been checked.

15.3.1 Coverage error

No coverage error is observed since the registration of a death is crucial for the burial.

15.3.1.1 Over-coverage – rate

There is no considerable over-coverage error.

15.3.1.2 Common units – proportion

n.a.

15.3.2 Measurement error

This kind of error can be due to wrong information provided in some variables from the questionnaires researched units or administrative records and can be corrected after communication with relevant bodies.

15.3.3 Non-response error

There are only a few cases of missing variables from Registries or non-reported CoD from forensic physicians.

15.3.4 Processing error

This error relates to incorrect values on data entry or incorrect results when processing, which are detected and corrected by performing logical checks and audits on the annual changes.

15.3.5 Model assumption error

n.a.

16. Timeliness and punctuality

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16.1 Timeliness

Annual data are announced and sent to Eurostat for the year N at N+24 months according to Regulation (EU) No 328/2011.

16.2 Punctuality

Data are produced and disseminated according to the predefined timetable.

17. Comparability

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17.1 Comparability - geographical

The comparability of the data across different countries is limited by the fact that the revision of classification used to collect information on underlying causes of death may be different. Furthermore, not all countries apply the recommended WHO's updates. Greece has started using ICD-10 (2008 Edition) from 01.01.2014 onwards. Data for the years 2014-2016 are available in both ICD-9 and ICD-10. From 2017 onwards data will be available only in ICD-10.

Due to the fact that 2011 data is the first data collection with a legal basis (and few changes in the requested variables and breakdowns), the data between 1994-2010 and starting from 2011 are not always comparable (In part due to the different groupings of causes of deaths). Moreover, time series for data on stillbirths are transmitted to Eurostat since 2011 and no information on previous data is available internationally.

The coverage of residents dying abroad or non-residents dying in the reporting country can also affect the comparability among countries.

In order to facilitate the comparisons among Countries, Eurostat disseminates data on Causes of death classified by the 65 causes of the "European shortlist" of causes of death.

17.1.1 Asymmetry for mirror flows statistics-coefficient

n.a.

17.2 Comparability over time

Nationally, data are available for comparison since 1956. It is also noted that a limitation to comparability over time can be due to a classification change, for which, however, users are informed. From 2014 onwards there has been a transition from the ICD-9 Classification of diseases to the ICD-10 (2008 edition) Classification of diseases, however, to enable comparisons, data for the years 2014-2016 are available in both ICD-9 and ICD-10.

18. Coherence

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18.1 Coherence cross-domain

There is no missing information (uncomplete geographical coverage, missing certificates etc).

18.1.1 Coherence-sub annual and annual statistics

Only annual statistics are available

18.1.2 Coherence-National Accounts

n.a.

18.2 Coherence-internal

Statistics are very consistent within a given data set. In order to ensure the internal coherence, common data collection framework (concepts, definitions, classifications, etc.) in all geographic areas and a common methodology in the compilation of results are applied. In addition, all causes of death are coded at a central level from a single team of coders.

19. Cost and Burden

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The cost and burden of the data collection is reduced by using validation and dissemination IT tools. Nevertheless, it hasn't been estimated.

20. Data revision Top
20.1 Revision policy
<p>Data, if necessary, can be revised according to the most recently updated data always pursuant to the Revision Policy of ELSTAT. Relevant link:</p> <p>https://www.statistics.gr/documents/20181/1195539/ELSTAT_Revisions_Policy_25_10_2018_EN.pdf/604b51dd-5dc2-4c7c-8b74-2766bda16e5e</p>
20.2 Revision practice
<p>There is no systematic revision of previous year data.</p>

21. Statistical processing Top
21.1 Source data
<p>Sources of information for CoD are Administrative records (Death Certificates) provided by Registries from all around the country and forensic physicians' reports in cases of violent or sudden deaths.</p>
21.2 Frequency of data collection
<p>Data on deaths are collected from Registry Offices on a monthly basis. Forensic physicians' reports are collected once in a year.</p>
21.3 Data collection
<p>Employees of Registry Offices register the Death Certificates in the Registrations Information System of the Ministry of Interior. ELSTAT draws the information required for statistical purposes from the Ministry's central database. In addition, every year ELSTAT inquires the underlying cause of death (UC) for pending cases of violent or sudden deaths from forensic physicians. There is only manual selection of the UC and no use of any form of automated coding is applied. UC is the only available information in the national CoD database. There are no different death certificates for neonates, but we additionally collect information on age in months/days or hours/minutes as well as death within marriage or out of wedlock or within registered partnership. Furthermore, the common birth certificate is also used for stillbirths.</p>
21.4 Data validation
<p>Local registers are the criteria for the validation of the coverage. In addition to the checks carried out by the administrative sources, validation checks are carried out by ELSTAT and Eurostat.</p>
21.5 Data compilation
<p>Time series of deaths by CoD, sex and 5-year age group for the Country-wide are available on ELSTAT's website.</p> <p>Other possible compilation of tables at a user's request (following the relevant procedures safeguarding the statistical confidentiality): by age, sex, marital status, citizenship, geographical place of birth/ residence/ event (geographical region, prefecture), place of death (e.g. house, hospital etc.), date of death, education level, occupation etc. as well as, comparative tables (time series), showing the evolution of the CoD.</p> <p>Other relevant compilations:</p> <p>Compilation of life expectancy at birth_ The mean number of years that an infant is expected to live if subjected throughout its life to the current mortality conditions (age specific probabilities of death).</p> <p>Compilation of total mortality rate_ Deaths during the reference year, per 1000 residents.</p> <p>Compilation of infant -neonatal- perinatal mortality rate_ The ratio of the number of deaths of children under the age of 1 year-28 days-1week old respectively, during the reference year, to the number of live births in that year. The ratio is expressed per 1000 births.</p> <p>Compilation of Life tables by sex and age.</p>

<u>21.5.1 Imputation-rate</u>
n.a
21.6 Adjustments
n.a
<u>21.6.1 Seasonal adjustment</u>
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