



Health statistics

Atlas on mortality in the European Union

Chapter 12 Stomach cancers

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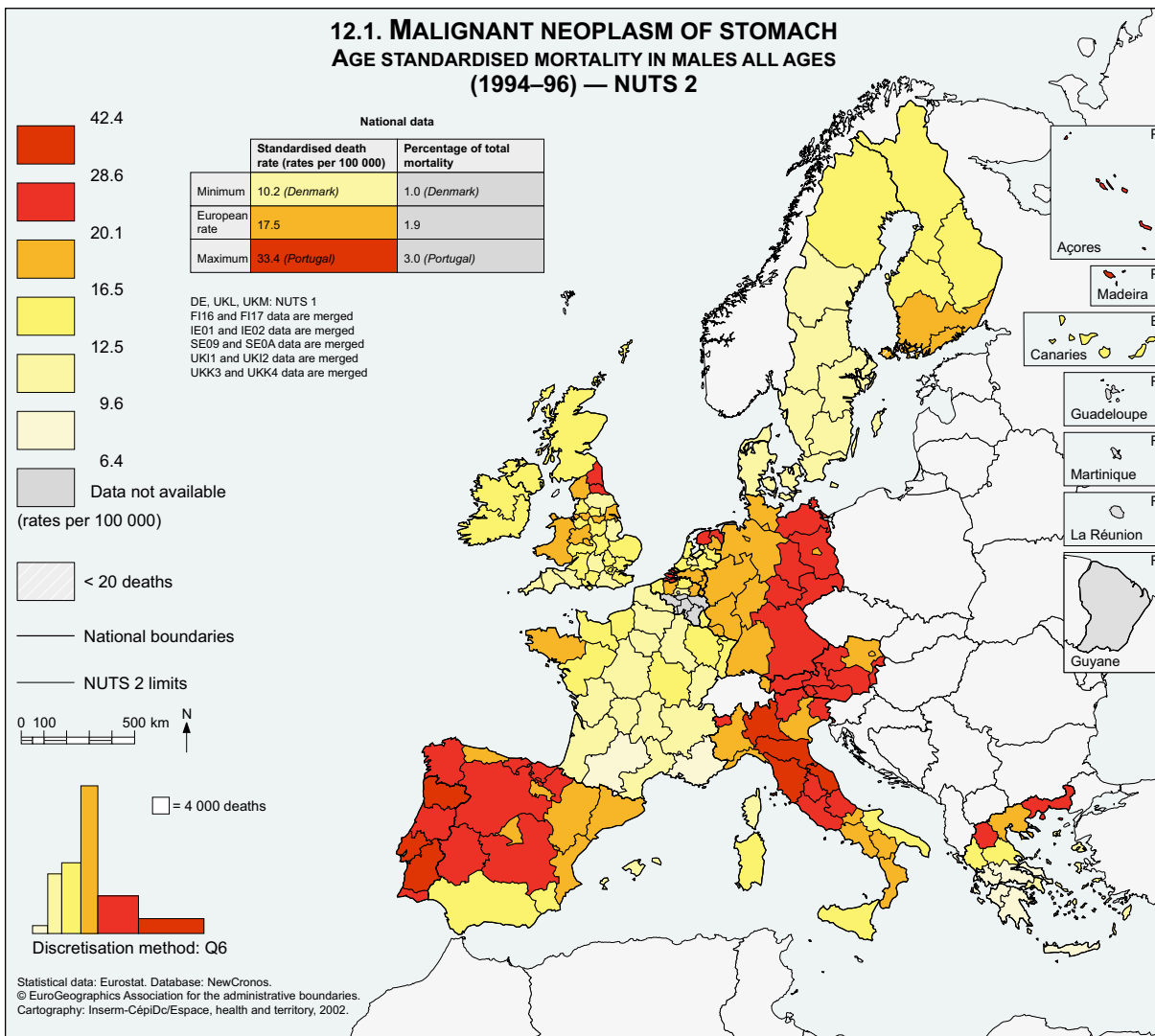
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12. Stomach cancers

Stomach cancers account for 1.8 % of general male mortality and 1.4 % of female mortality. The age of death is high, with three quarters of such cancers occurring after 65 years. The risk of dying from stomach cancer is twice as high in the male population.

The fact that the geographical patterns for both male and female mortality are similar means that they probably share common factors.

The maps portraying mortality from stomach cancers thus reveal major disparities in the EU.

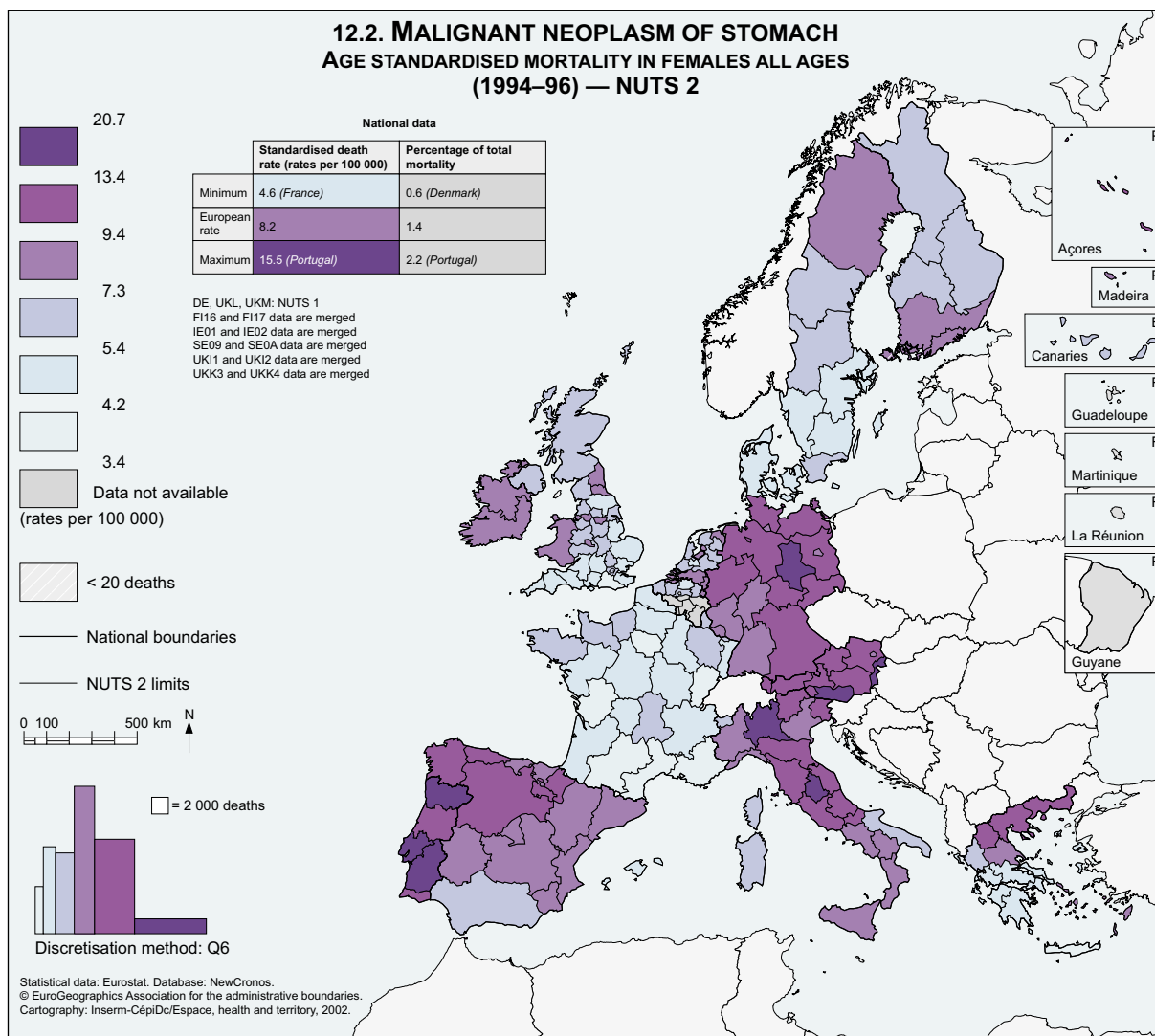
Germany and Austria, the Iberian Peninsula, particularly Portugal, and Italy are badly affected as a whole and have regional totals up to seven times higher than those of the least affected European regions. However, inside these Member States there are some

nuances. The islands and the south of Spain have lower rates. In Italy, the regions of Lombardia down to the central regions are more affected than the southern regions. The east of Germany also has higher rates than the west. However, there is a clear difference between northern Greece, which has excess mortality, and the south of the country with below-average mortality.

In the rest of the EU, stomach cancers have less impact, except in a few regions: the Netherlands, southern Finland, northern England and Wales.

Denmark, France, southern Sweden and the United Kingdom have the lowest mortality rates. In France, the southern regions are particularly well placed on a par with the southern regions of Greece, while the west is more affected.

On the whole, despite a few sub-national contrasts, the spatial structures reveal that there is



primarily a national component in mortality from stomach cancers. Epidemiological studies have shown that eating habits play an important part in the development of these cancers, which are close-

ly linked with the consumption of cured and smoked foods and a low intake of fresh fruit and vegetables. Other risk factors have also been identified, such as infection by *Helicobacter pylori*.

