

Hospital discharges and length of stay statistics

Statistics Explained

*Data extracted in October 2023.
Planned article update: January 2026.*

Highlights

" In 2021, France recorded the highest discharge rate for all hospitalised patients (41 100 per 100 000 inhabitants for in-patients and day care patients) among the EU Member States. "

" Circulatory diseases were the most common main diagnosis for in-patients in 2021 in most of the EU Member States; however, this was not the case in Ireland, Croatia or Romania. "

" In 2021, in-patients in Hungary and Czechia spent the longest average number of days in hospital, 9.7 and 9.5 days, respectively. "

This article presents an overview of [European Union \(EU\)](#) statistics related to the number and rate of hospital [discharges](#) and the average length of stay for patients in [hospitals](#) . It provides information relating to hospital discharges of [in-patients](#) and day care patients, providing analyses for the age and gender of patients and their diagnoses; this may be used as an indicator for the level of [healthcare](#) activity in hospitals. A similar collection of analyses is presented for the average length of stay for in-patients. This article is one of a set of statistical articles concerning healthcare activities in the EU which forms part of an online publication on [health statistics](#) . This article includes data that may have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and its related restrictions. For this reason, particular attention should be paid when comparing the 2020 and/or 2021 data with data from earlier years. In some EU Member States, healthcare resources were placed under intense pressure (particularly at the start of the pandemic) from an influx of patients with COVID-19. The pandemic also resulted in a range of knock-on effects including, among others, some services being curtailed/postponed due to the number of COVID-19 patients, staff shortages within hospitals and day care centres due to infection/quarantine procedures, and patients being hindered access to medical services due to their own infection/quarantine as well as lockdown or travel restrictions.

Hospital discharges

A hospital discharge occurs when a hospital patient is formally released after an episode of care. The reasons for discharge include finalisation of treatment, signing out against medical advice, transfer to another healthcare institution, or because of death. The data should cover all types of hospitals, including general hospitals, mental health hospitals and other specialised hospitals, as well as all types of diagnosis and treatment, including discharges of healthy new-borns.

In practice, data availability is more limited in some national statistics and a summary of the main deviations from the standard coverage is provided in the *Data sources* section below. In cases where national statistics exclude any types of hospitals this will understate, to a greater or lesser extent, the number and rate of discharges. This is particularly true for certain types of diagnoses if the exclusions are related to specialisations. For example, the exclusion of psychiatric hospitals or mental health care institutions has an impact on the data for discharges of patients diagnosed with mental and behavioural disorders.

Cyprus, Ireland, France, Romania, Portugal, Spain and the Netherlands reported more day care patients than in-patients

Among the 20 EU Member States for which recent data are available for in-patients and for day care patients (incomplete data for Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Greece, Croatia, Luxembourg and Malta), Cyprus, Ireland, France, Romania, Portugal, Spain and the Netherlands reported more discharges of day care patients than in-patients in 2021. By contrast, there were around 10 times as many in-patient discharges as discharges of day care patients in Sweden, and this ratio reached a level between 25 and 43 times as high in Czechia, Slovakia and Germany.

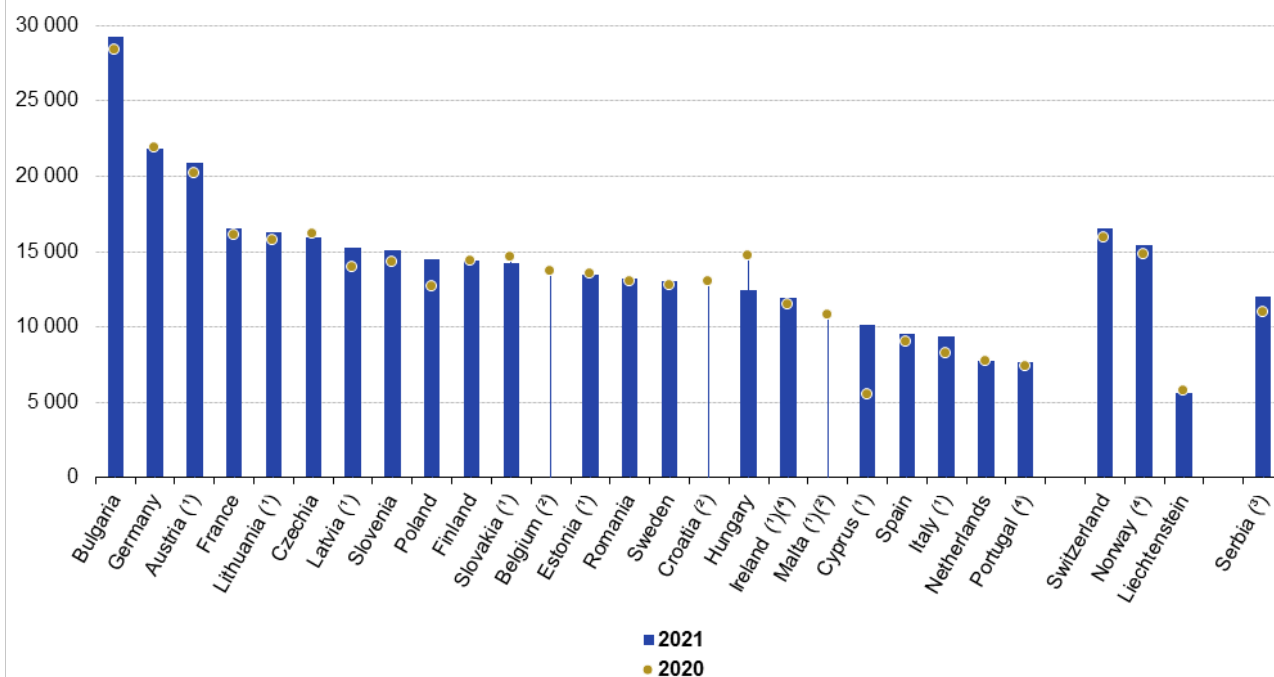
Relative to population size, discharge rates in 2021 for in-patients were in the range of 11 900 to 16 500 per 100 000 inhabitants for most EU Member States (see Figure 1).

- Austria, Germany and most notably Bulgaria (29 300 per 100 000 inhabitants) reported higher rates.
- Cyprus, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands and Portugal, reported lower rates.

Comparing the highest and lowest values, the in-patient discharge rate in Bulgaria was 3.8 times as high as in Portugal.

Figure 1 compares the in-patients discharge rate for 2021 with the rate for 2020, in other words comparing the second and first calendar years of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic; note that the COVID-19 crisis may have impacted discharge numbers in 2020 and 2021. A majority (16 from 21) of the EU Member States for which data are available recorded a higher discharge rate in 2021. Germany, Estonia, Czechia, Slovakia and Hungary reported lower rates in 2021. Among the non-EU countries for which data are presented in Figure 1, Liechtenstein was the only one to record a rate in 2021 that was below its 2020 value.

Hospital discharges, in-patients, 2020 and 2021
(per 100 000 inhabitants)



Note: Denmark, Greece and Luxembourg, not available.

(1) Excluding liveborn infants.

(2) 2021: not available.

(3) 2021: excluding liveborn infants.

(4) Public sector hospitals only.

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: hlth_co_disch2)

eurostat

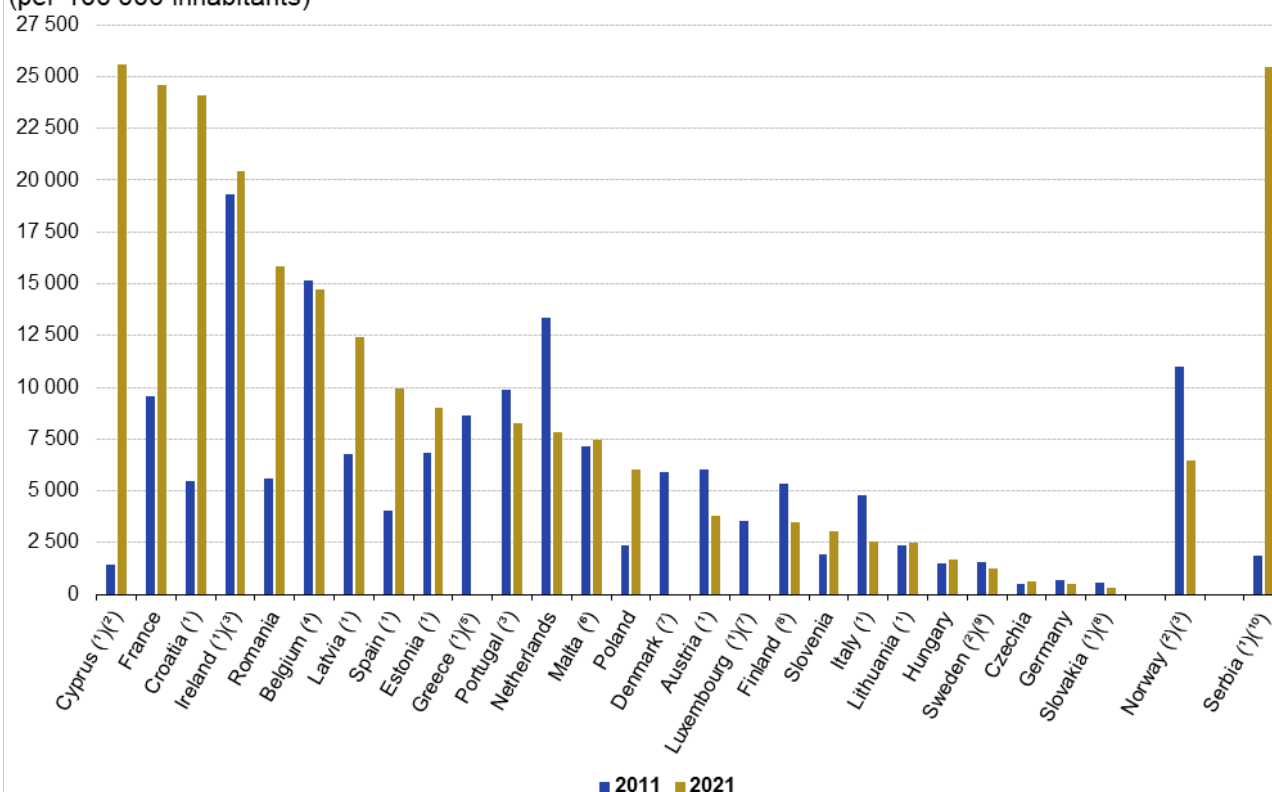
Figure 1: Hospital discharges, in-patients, 2020 and 2021 (per 100 000 inhabitants) Source: Eurostat (hlth_co_disch2)

Turning to discharges of day care patients relative to population size (see Figure 2), the discharge rates among the EU Member States in 2021 were generally in the range of 1 300 to 15 900 per 100 000 inhabitants.

- Ireland, Croatia, France and Cyprus reported rates that were higher (20 400 to 25 600 per 100 000 inhabitants).
- Czechia (640 per 100 000 inhabitants), Germany (502 per 100 000 inhabitants) and Slovakia (338 per 100 000 inhabitants) reported lower rates.

In 14 of the 23 EU Member States for which data are available for the 2 years shown in Figure 2, the ratio of day care discharges to population size increased over a 10-year period; note that the COVID-19 crisis may have impacted day care discharge numbers in 2021. In absolute terms, the largest increases in this rate were observed in Cyprus (note that there is a break in series), Croatia, France and Romania, up by at least 10 000 discharges per 100 000 inhabitants. The largest decrease was in the Netherlands, down 5 600 discharges per 100 000 inhabitants.

Hospital discharges, day care patients, 2011 and 2021 (per 100 000 inhabitants)



Note: Bulgaria, not available. Iceland: no discharges of day care patients.

(¹) Excluding liveborn infants.

(²) Break in series.

(³) Public sector hospitals only.

(⁴) 2020 instead of 2021.

(⁵) 2013 instead of 2011. 2021: not available.

(⁶) 2019 instead of 2021.

(⁷) 2021: not available.

(⁸) 2012 instead of 2011.

(⁹) 2010 instead of 2011.

(¹⁰) 2014 instead of 2011.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hlth_co_disch4)

eurostat

Figure 2: Hospital discharges, day care patients, 2011 and 2021 (per 100 000 inhabitants) Source: Eurostat (hlth_co_disch4)

The highest discharge rate for all hospitalised patients was in France

Combining discharge rates in 2021 for in-patients and day care patients, the highest discharge rate for all hospitalised patients was in France with a rate of 41 100 per 100 000 inhabitants (incomplete data for Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia and Malta; no recent data for Denmark, Greece or Luxembourg). Cyprus and Ireland also reported rates above 30 000 per 100 000 inhabitants, with Bulgaria (excluding day care patients) and Romania

recording rates just below this level. The lowest combined rate was in Italy (11 900 per 100 000 inhabitants).

Hospital discharges by sex and age

Fewer discharges of male patients than of female patients in nearly all EU Member States

Among the EU Member States for which data are available (no recent data for Denmark, Greece or Luxembourg), in all but one – Malta (2020 data) – there were more discharges of female in-patients than male in-patients in 2021. This was also the case in most of the non-EU countries shown in Figure 3, Montenegro (2019 data) being the only exception. For day care patients (no recent data also for Bulgaria and Estonia), Cyprus (2019 data), France, Germany, Ireland and Malta (2020 data) reported more discharges of male patients than female patients.

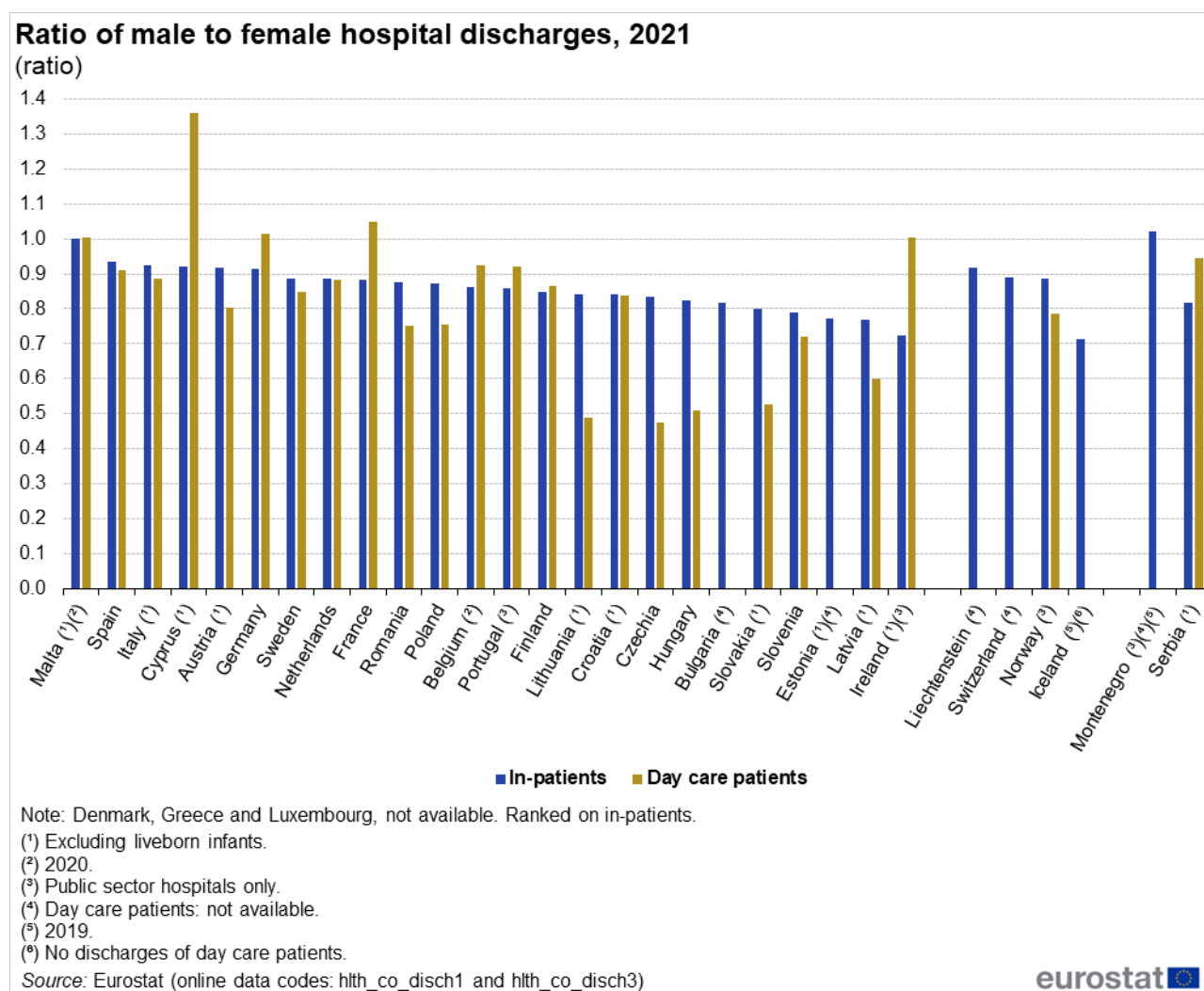


Figure 3: Ratio of male to female hospital discharges, 2021 (ratio) Source: Eurostat (hlth_co_disch1) and (hlth_co_disch3)

Tables 1 and 2 provide an analysis of discharge rates in 2021 by age, distinguishing male and female patients, as well as in-patients and day care patients. Due to space constraints, only a selection of age ranges is shown, whereas the full set of data – available online – has been used for the following commentary.

Different age pattern to in-patient discharge rates for males and females, mainly characterised by high discharge rates for females in typical child-bearing age ranges

Among male in-patients, discharge rates were generally high for infants aged less than 1 year, then fell to relatively low rates among males aged 5–29 years, before increasing again in old(er) age. Among female in-patients, discharge rates:

- were also generally high for female infants aged less than 1 year;
- fell to relatively low rates among female children aged 5–14 years;
- increased through common childbearing ages to a peak in the age groups around 30–34 years;
- decreased again to another low among females aged 40–44 or 45–49 years (but at higher rates than the low observed for female children);
- increased again in old(er) age, although with discharge rates that were generally lower than for males.

Discharge rates for infants aged less than 1 year exceeded 125 000 per 100 000 inhabitants in Belgium (2020 data), France and Slovenia for both males and females. In Switzerland, this rate was also above 125 000 per 100 000 inhabitants for males. Among the EU Member States, the lowest discharge rates for infants aged less than 1 year, below 25 000 per 100 000 inhabitants, were recorded in Cyprus for males and for females. In Serbia, this rate was also below 25 000 per 100 000 inhabitants for females. Note that the data for several EU Member States and for Serbia do not include discharges of healthy new-borns.

Hospital discharges of in-patients, by age (selected age ranges) and by sex, 2021

(per 100 000 inhabitants)

	Males								Females							
	< 1 year	1–4 years	15–19 years	30–34 years	45–49 years	60–64 years	75–79 years	90–94 years	< 1 year	1–4 years	15–19 years	30–34 years	45–49 years	60–64 years	75–79 years	90–94 years
Belgium (*)	131 522	7 020	3 458	4 718	8 505	17 602	35 480	60 984	126 219	6 199	4 574	18 341	9 074	13 566	26 876	45 481
Bulgaria	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Czechia	117 944	9 242	6 417	6 233	9 640	20 285	45 395	84 746	114 825	7 619	9 475	23 088	10 345	14 158	33 005	66 002
Denmark	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Germany	118 233	9 463	7 098	8 464	13 698	31 056	49 233	99 640	113 170	7 483	10 697	21 924	13 792	23 630	39 266	77 654
Estonia	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Ireland (*)	41 450	6 964	4 183	4 709	7 328	15 043	36 637	67 837	36 454	6 035	6 037	25 945	7 753	12 260	30 172	53 494
Greece	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Spain	32 812	4 621	2 917	3 403	5 818	14 054	29 638	64 579	27 410	3 640	3 524	12 549	5 812	9 171	18 593	46 724
France	134 091	6 977	4 824	6 434	10 074	21 616	46 999	105 391	128 289	5 652	7 378	20 835	9 427	14 335	32 758	76 510
Croatia (*)	57 270	8 358	5 424	5 002	9 100	20 303	34 474	58 641	49 181	6 768	6 533	22 420	9 044	13 702	23 561	42 751
Italy (*)	41 960	4 842	3 028	2 926	5 063	12 633	25 883	46 905	36 522	3 702	3 078	13 059	5 346	8 531	17 651	32 650
Cyprus (*)	24 564	6 446	3 041	3 891	7 601	17 153	35 755	70 798	19 437	5 744	3 165	12 804	8 881	10 884	24 037	68 842
Latvia (*)	34 005	9 247	6 146	7 323	12 066	23 643	37 856	64 950	28 065	7 817	9 388	17 324	10 709	17 422	26 602	47 598
Lithuania (*)	84 784	15 331	6 370	7 115	11 848	25 996	44 468	68 547	80 713	12 472	8 805	17 664	10 424	16 432	30 454	47 471
Luxembourg	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Hungary	110 778	9 532	4 323	3 517	7 242	18 789	36 271	50 915	105 984	7 749	7 710	13 807	6 757	12 581	26 093	44 330
Malta (*)	124 471	11 840	5 999	5 213	8 240	18 916	43 891	83 134	116 288	9 226	7 444	14 653	8 054	14 027	30 078	67 553
Netherlands	72 005	5 405	1 602	1 893	3 506	10 174	26 600	47 658	66 930	4 349	2 003	12 108	4 058	8 157	18 972	29 846
Austria (*)	36 523	9 280	8 206	7 937	14 017	32 723	58 538	107 200	30 663	7 171	10 867	20 077	13 835	23 655	46 064	80 617
Poland	116 881	13 193	6 229	5 442	9 388	20 503	44 552	58 883	111 349	10 868	7 968	16 014	9 536	14 150	30 458	42 826
Portugal (*)	90 597	3 278	2 088	2 320	4 191	9 825	19 450	53 976	88 359	2 715	2 620	10 026	4 103	6 477	13 291	37 502
Romania	109 576	10 141	4 404	4 273	8 869	20 370	35 361	28 791	104 358	8 218	9 131	13 153	8 944	14 402	25 069	20 654
Slovenia	135 876	15 875	5 939	4 862	7 504	17 008	33 965	66 173	129 381	13 162	8 342	30 541	9 288	12 352	22 944	45 996
Slovakia (*)	58 486	10 392	5 444	5 021	9 481	22 292	46 864	63 138	50 697	8 873	10 761	19 460	9 168	14 939	34 029	56 126
Finland	40 349	4 336	3 437	4 493	7 477	17 114	46 393	132 969	33 980	3 663	6 001	15 649	7 103	12 711	35 570	101 270
Sweden	117 146	3 736	3 018	4 270	6 060	15 294	38 894	100 776	112 224	3 030	4 785	18 049	6 420	11 509	30 132	68 355
Iceland (*)	114 007	3 972	3 252	2 785	4 508	11 913	30 903	66 926	116 910	3 251	4 464	17 430	6 635	11 429	26 285	44 735
Norway (*)	121 251	5 765	4 880	6 517	8 989	19 410	49 681	96 730	117 253	4 299	7 868	21 350	9 788	15 658	38 588	70 037
Switzerland	128 458	5 684	6 803	6 615	9 912	22 279	45 977	94 091	124 031	4 456	8 350	20 004	10 282	17 239	37 105	68 435
Serbia (*)	27 135	9 323	3 968	3 656	7 915	18 671	32 210	22 768	24 382	7 849	6 635	17 690	8 115	14 081	22 759	15 747

(*) 2020.

(*) Excluding liveborn infants.

(*) Public sector hospitals only.

(*) 2019.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hlth_co_disch2)

eurostat 

Table 1: Hospital discharges of in-patients, by age (selected age ranges) and by sex, 2021 (per 100 000 inhabitants) Source: Eurostat (hlth_co_disch2)

The age structure of discharge rates for day care patients is quite similar for males and females

While for in-patients the highest discharge rates were normally recorded for infants aged less than 1 year, for day care patients this was only the case in Germany, Slovakia and Sweden (no recent data or incomplete data for Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Greece and Luxembourg). In fact, some EU Member States recorded their lowest discharge rates for day care patients among infants aged less than 1 year: Hungary just for males and France for males and females.

Hospital discharges of day care patients, by age (selected age ranges) and by sex, 2021

(per 100 000 inhabitants)

	Males								Females							
	< 1 year	1-4 years	15-19 years	30-34 years	45-49 years	60-64 years	75-79 years	90-94 years	< 1 year	1-4 years	15-19 years	30-34 years	45-49 years	60-64 years	75-79 years	90-94 years
Belgium (*)	12 325	10 146	7 527	7 035	11 470	22 143	39 852	27 408	6 969	5 490	8 620	10 523	14 933	21 825	31 715	15 675
Bulgaria																
Czechia	714	382	336	221	318	654	979	694	618	296	566	1 590	1 065	672	808	282
Denmark																
Germany	4 536	350	454	388	389	530	767	2 300	4 412	240	537	833	273	315	519	1 507
Estonia																
Ireland (*)	4 766	4 266	4 937	8 837	16 274	44 190	86 576	56 457	4 161	3 658	4 958	15 983	21 489	36 168	63 220	37 787
Greece																
Spain	3 828	3 160	3 686	4 658	7 326	16 574	30 437	17 494	3 251	2 061	3 788	7 048	10 257	15 233	22 601	10 042
France	8 971	16 207	16 255	18 318	25 627	36 230	48 002	25 903	7 116	7 586	17 584	20 537	26 284	31 361	39 461	17 430
Croatia (*)	30 975	22 245	10 589	9 049	20 070	35 986	55 506	36 752	24 241	17 710	15 830	24 553	25 256	33 168	37 561	19 041
Italy (*)	3 415	2 830	2 062	1 214	1 628	3 267	5 060	3 588	2 765	1 860	1 919	3 248	2 519	2 849	3 120	1 471
Cyprus (*)	4 556	4 457	3 124	8 631	25 521	62 705	136 274	85 275	3 197	3 049	3 173	8 529	28 836	41 841	81 874	41 145
Latvia (*)	4 365	9 256	3 437	4 879	8 877	16 595	23 109	11 927	4 776	5 348	8 000	8 567	16 093	23 581	18 052	9 357
Lithuania (*)	1 533	3 703	757	1 001	1 220	2 447	3 410	2 500	1 041	2 412	1 054	3 314	4 420	3 377	3 303	1 340
Luxembourg																
Hungary	285	442	406	502	900	1 820	4 916	3 357	247	306	1 152	2 392	2 358	1 785	4 398	2 430
Malta (*)	1 266	1 372	2 044	3 086	6 102	14 080	21 640	9 031	975	1 130	2 610	5 650	9 725	12 147	14 593	4 763
Netherlands	3 179	6 883	2 913	3 100	4 662	12 265	24 460	14 071	2 535	4 564	3 099	6 118	7 757	12 948	18 635	6 657
Austria (*)	2 202	2 603	1 724	1 213	2 003	5 109	11 781	10 207	1 523	1 432	1 602	2 872	2 988	4 894	11 359	6 284
Poland	8 526	5 419	3 976	2 740	3 456	7 394	17 302	12 701	7 039	4 120	3 513	4 223	7 053	8 415	14 241	7 468
Portugal (*)	1 833	2 317	1 658	2 239	4 763	13 953	29 699	25 690	1 151	1 561	1 296	3 305	8 059	12 310	19 912	10 227
Romania	15 082	6 816	4 642	7 798	11 345	27 616	37 270	12 439	13 124	5 978	6 510	14 516	18 688	29 136	25 281	5 649
Slovenia	3 870	2 761	1 399	1 088	1 795	3 943	5 946	4 976	2 792	2 205	1 742	5 282	3 604	3 894	3 802	3 737
Slovakia (*)	1 621	242	151	121	171	369	767	478	1 478	197	393	603	438	344	581	343
Finland	4 660	2 785	1 719	1 902	2 725	4 247	8 473	10 116	4 099	2 088	2 220	4 001	3 105	4 083	7 483	5 741
Sweden	14 002	803	747	657	740	1 306	2 301	3 598	14 256	583	1 056	2 294	876	960	1 688	2 539
Iceland (*)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Norway (*)	6 430	3 870	3 702	3 948	4 950	7 664	15 249	15 198	5 703	2 549	4 480	8 546	7 420	8 683	14 068	9 520
Serbia (*)	4 738	6 618	6 886	12 213	24 797	47 539	57 486	16 144	5 212	3 761	6 722	15 025	38 266	41 150	30 449	5 431

(*) 2020.

(*) Excluding liveborn infants.

(*) Public sector hospitals only.

(*) 2019.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hlth_co_disch4)

eurostat 

Table 2: Hospital discharges of day care patients, by age (selected age ranges) and by sex, 2021 (per 100 000 inhabitants) Source: Eurostat (hlth_co_disch4)

In 2021, day care discharge rates for males in many EU Member States fell across the age groups from relatively high rates for infants aged less than 1 year through to relatively low rates for age groups between 5–9 and 30–34 years. The rates were generally higher for older age groups and often peaked in the age groups around 70–74 through to 80–84 years before declining again. There were only a few exceptions to these patterns for the lowest and highest rates for males:

- in Slovakia, the lowest rate was among people aged 95 years or over, and this was also the case in Serbia; as noted above, the lowest rate for males in France and Hungary was for infants aged less than 1 year;
- in Lithuania, the age group with the highest discharge rate for males was for children aged 1–4 years; as noted above, the highest rate for males in Germany, Slovakia and Sweden was for infants aged less than 1 year.

For females, the general pattern was somewhat different. The lowest day care discharge rates for females in 2021 were most often recorded in younger age groups than for males, particularly for children aged 5–9 years and 10–14 years. Atypically, the lowest rates were recorded in Poland for the age group (20–24 years) and in Italy, Lithuania and Romania (as well as in Serbia) for the age group 95 years and over; as noted above, the lowest rate for females

in France was for infants aged less than 1 year.

It was common among the EU Member States for day care discharge rates for females to rise again from the age group 15–19 years. In line with what was observed for males, day care discharge rates in 2021 for females most commonly peaked for the age group 75–79 years (or in a slightly younger or older age group) before dipping back down for the oldest age groups. A small number of Member States recorded their highest day care discharge rates for females among younger age groups:

- for the age group 50–54 years in Lithuania;
- for the age groups 30–34 years or 35–39 years in Czechia, Italy and Slovenia;
- for infants aged less than 1 year in Germany, Slovakia and Sweden (as noted above).

Hospital discharges by diagnosis

Discharges by diagnosis – as presented in Tables 3 and 4 as well as Figure 4 – refer to the principal diagnosis, in other words, the main condition diagnosed at the end of a patient’s hospitalisation. The main condition is the one primarily responsible for the patient’s need for treatment or investigation.

Hospital discharges of in-patients, by disease/injury, 2021

(per 100 000 inhabitants)

	Neoplasms	Mental and behavioural disorders	Diseases of the circulatory system	Diseases of the respiratory system	Diseases of the digestive system	Diseases of the musculo-skeletal system and connective tissue	Diseases of the genitourinary system	Pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium	Injury, poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes
Belgium (*)	943	224	1 563	1 225	1 300	1 087	732	1 126	1 320
Bulgaria	2 254	459	3 344	1 849	2 564	1 317	1 692	1 628	1 752
Czechia	1 351	568	1 968	1 507	1 380	979	1 084	1 227	1 329
Denmark	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Germany	2 271	1 463	3 257	1 285	2 020	2 209	1 147	1 140	2 140
Estonia	1 767	848	2 113	1 513	1 078	790	729	1 220	1 040
Ireland (*)	628	183	1 089	1 100	973	510	675	1 940	1 161
Greece	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Spain	911	240	1 228	755	1 161	651	701	790	897
France	988	1 023	1 857	783	1 167	916	782	1 289	1 175
Croatia	1 830	724	1 788	1 256	955	932	667	1 172	1 002
Italy	1 027	229	1 511	683	808	641	594	788	868
Cyprus	1 174	68	1 278	1 278	1 105	570	933	1 040	918
Latvia	1 781	1 240	2 648	720	1 166	1 279	721	1 228	1 319
Lithuania	1 632	908	2 632	1 889	1 533	1 275	910	1 072	1 140
Luxembourg	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Hungary	1 481	512	1 719	598	785	599	666	1 056	918
Malta (*)	457	381	1 091	750	908	296	721	978	992
Netherlands	828	40	1 172	449	737	483	443	710	754
Austria	2 584	1 036	2 833	1 041	1 896	2 403	1 230	1 152	2 389
Poland	1 414	553	2 058	857	1 148	860	892	1 189	947
Portugal (*)	769	153	1 061	605	758	355	553	689	683
Romania	1 442	767	1 586	1 878	1 211	800	613	1 104	634
Slovenia	1 547	508	1 681	1 469	1 080	799	868	1 165	1 164
Slovakia	1 456	683	2 007	1 516	1 255	706	647	1 298	1 056
Finland	1 340	1 090	2 109	829	1 163	1 111	808	947	1 439
Sweden	834	903	1 607	667	1 027	633	657	1 162	1 191
Iceland (*)	861	824	987	484	796	656	454	1 390	797
Liechtenstein	156	664	488	526	763	482	375	13	1 138
Norway (*)	1 350	1 350	1 877	983	1 236	907	852	182	1 478
Switzerland	1 476	1 254	1 771	1 079	1 357	2 034	933	1 184	2 109
Montenegro (*)	1 494	226	1 662	1 428	1 091	804	841	259	646
Serbia	1 448	292	1 426	1 827	758	617	619	1 119	614

(*) 2020.

(*) Public sector hospitals only.

(*) 2019.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hlth_co_disch2)

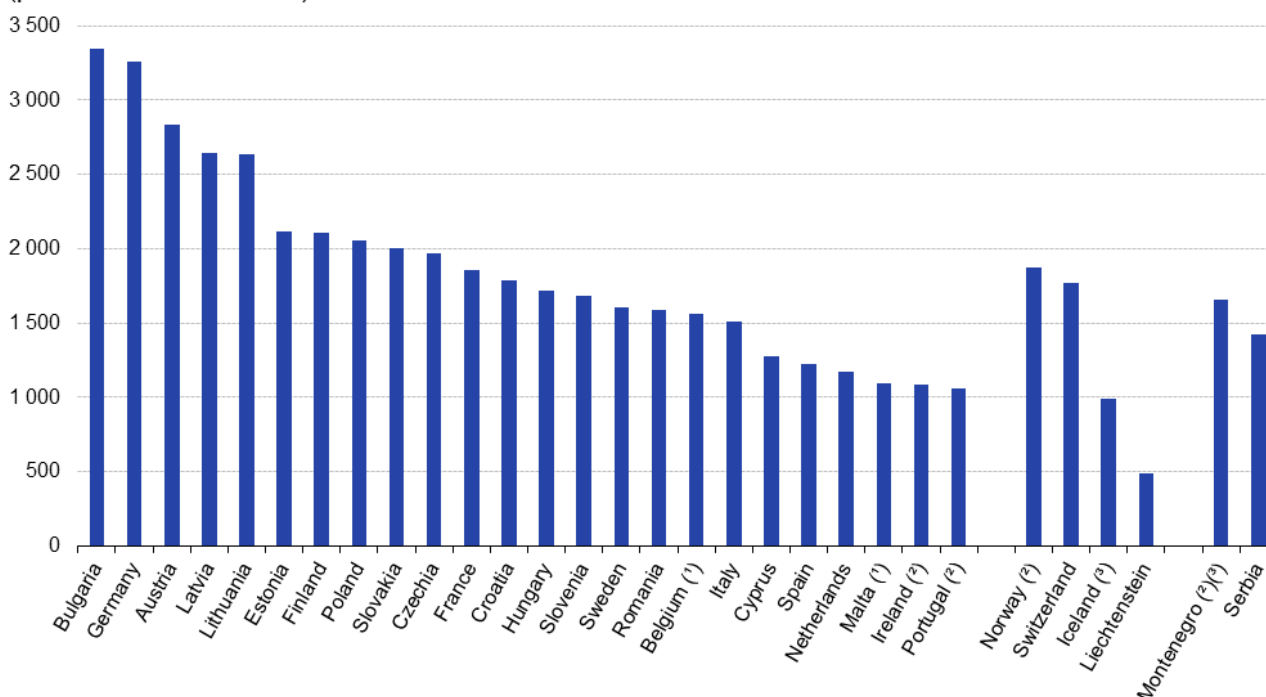
Table 3: Hospital discharges of in-patients, by disease/injury, 2021 (per 100 000 inhabitants) Source: Eurostat (hlth_co_disch2)

In nearly all EU Member States, circulatory diseases were the most common main diagnosis for in-patients

For in-patients, the main diagnosis in 2021 across EU Member States was circulatory diseases, as shown in Table 3 and Figure 4. The rare exceptions to this were: Ireland where the category of pregnancy and childbirth was the most common; Romania where diseases of the respiratory system were the most common; Croatia where neoplasms (benign or malignant cancers) were the most common. In two of these three Member States, circulatory diseases were the second most common diagnosis, whereas in Ireland the category of injury, poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes was the second most common. Across all of the Member States, other diagnoses that were also common included neoplasms, diseases of the digestive system, injury, poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes, pregnancy and childbirth, and diseases of the respiratory system.

Hospital discharges of in-patients, diseases of the circulatory system, 2021

(per 100 000 inhabitants)



Note: Denmark, Greece and Luxembourg, not available.

(*) 2020.

(*) Public sector hospitals only.

(*) 2019.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hlth_co_disch2)

eurostat

Figure 4: Hospital discharges of in-patients, diseases of the circulatory system, 2021 (per 100 000 inhabitants) Source: Eurostat (hlth_co_disch2)

The most common main diagnoses for day care patients were neoplasms and diseases of the digestive or genitourinary systems

For day care patients, the most common main diagnosis was less clear cut in 2021, with a majority of the EU Member States reporting their highest discharge rates for either neoplasms or for diseases of the genitourinary system, reflecting the use of day care for some cancer treatments (such as chemotherapy) and some kidney disease treatments (such as dialysis). There were four other diagnoses that were relatively common across the Member States:

- diseases of the digestive system, which was the most common in Belgium (2020 data), Ireland, Spain and Malta (2020 data);
- diseases of the musculo-skeletal system and connective tissue, which was the most common in Latvia;
- mental and behavioural disorders, which was the most common in France; and

- diseases of the circulatory system, which was the most common in Germany.

Although less common in general among the EU Member States, injury, poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes was the most common diagnosis for day care patients in 2021 in Finland and Sweden.

Hospital discharges of day care patients, by disease/injury, 2021

(per 100 000 inhabitants)

	Neoplasms	Mental and behavioural disorders	Diseases of the circulatory system	Diseases of the respiratory system	Diseases of the digestive system	Diseases of the musculo-skeletal system and connective tissue	Diseases of the genitourinary system	Pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium	Injury, poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes
Belgium ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾	1 799	51	525	256	2 511	1 286	674	116	579
Bulgaria	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Czechia	36	12	108	14	40	31	158	111	24
Denmark	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Germany	20	59	83	20	30	10	20	46	57
Estonia	1 035	255	627	253	337	600	2 099	534	92
Ireland ⁽³⁾⁽⁴⁾	2 034	16	298	290	2 181	877	664	250	123
Greece	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Spain ⁽⁵⁾	998	269	327	193	1 090	705	740	49	194
France	1 094	5 134	479	225	2 217	781	674	366	587
Croatia	6 272	2 354	1 098	854	991	1 104	1 952	405	213
Italy	327	53	145	68	211	240	320	140	82
Cyprus	5 832	24	479	438	594	436	13 080	220	281
Latvia	1 831	1 865	908	231	525	2 525	1 266	140	445
Lithuania	338	6	217	72	255	158	478	110	48
Luxembourg	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Hungary	51	2	64	13	66	75	341	231	85
Malta ⁽¹⁾	258	1	107	47	520	320	418	24	68
Netherlands	2 485	8	563	240	1 302	555	261	106	227
Austria	486	56	206	42	168	313	340	87	223
Poland	1 047	19	188	150	179	197	555	85	854
Portugal ⁽⁶⁾	347	4	292	112	333	210	809	12	87
Romania	4 065	326	1 411	864	1 857	789	677	196	138
Slovenia	376	69	279	35	86	158	295	174	116
Slovakia	21	5	45	12	17	6	63	60	21
Finland	300	94	258	132	312	281	166	122	385
Sweden	53	104	141	34	65	32	51	129	152
Iceland ⁽⁷⁾	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Norway ⁽⁸⁾	615	331	489	326	457	687	724	105	595
Serbia	1 047	2 160	207	677	347	402	566	82	175

(1) 2020.

(2) Excluding some or all psychiatric hospitals or mental health care institutions.

(3) Public sector hospitals only.

(4) 2019.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hlth_co_disch4)

eurostat 

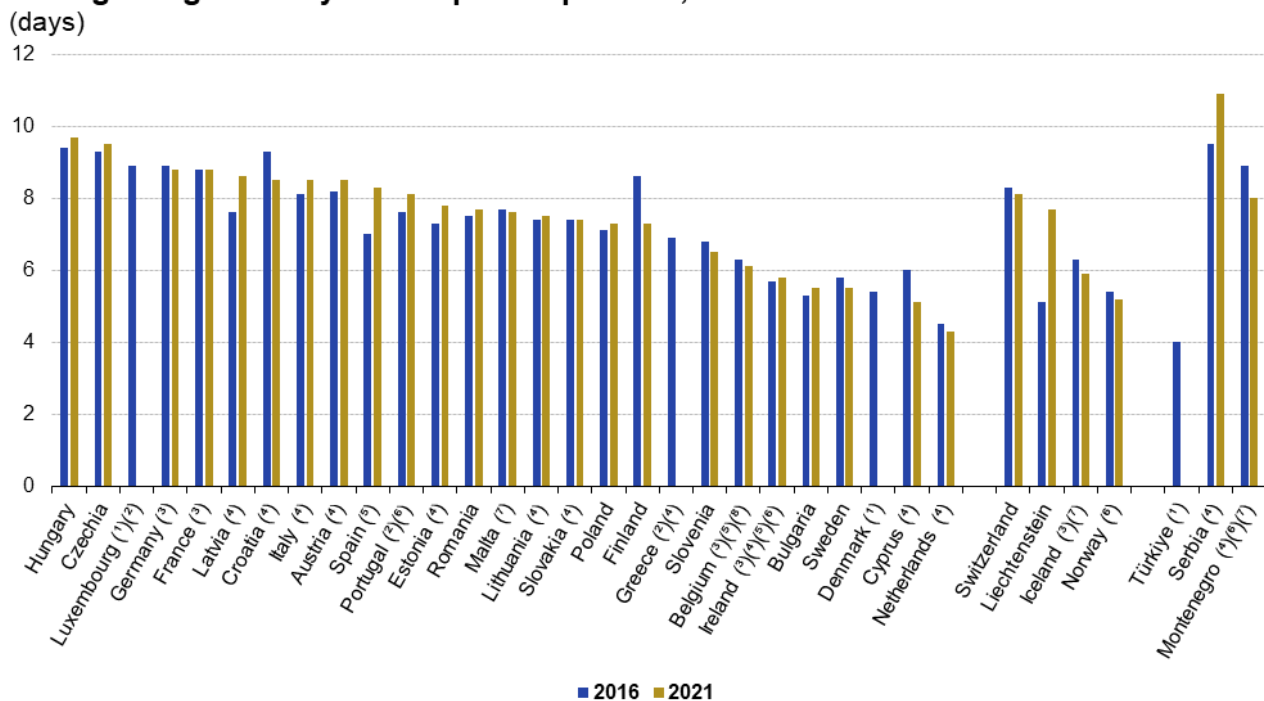
Table 4: Hospital discharges of day care patients, by disease/injury, 2021 (per 100 000 inhabitants) Source: Eurostat (hlth_co_disch4)

Average length of hospital stay for in-patients

The average length of stay for in-patients is calculated from the total number of nights spent in hospitals divided by the total number of discharges. As such, the average length of stay may be less influenced by coverage issues (insofar as the average length of stay in the institutions excluded from the coverage may be similar to that in the institutions that are covered). This is clearly not the case when only acute care institutions are covered but not those providing long-term care; in these cases, the average length of stay is likely to be underestimated. A summary of the main deviations from the standard coverage is provided in the *Data sources* section below and highlights those national statistics where some of these issues can be found.

In 2021 (or the latest year for which data are available; see Figure 5), the average length of a hospital stay for in-patients ranged in most EU Member States from 5.1 days in Cyprus to 8.8 days in Germany. The Netherlands was below this range (4.3 days) while Czechia (9.5 days) and Hungary (9.7 days) were above it. Among the non-member countries for which data are available, Serbia reported a relatively high average (10.9 days).

Average length of stay for hospital in-patients, 2016 and 2021 (days)



(1) 2021: not available.
 (2) 2015 instead of 2011.
 (3) Excluding some or all long-stay hospitals.
 (4) Excluding liveborn infants.
 (5) Excluding some or all psychiatric hospitals or mental health care institutions.
 (6) Public sector hospitals only.
 (7) 2019 instead of 2021.
 (8) 2020 instead of 2021.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hlth_co_inpst)

eurostat

Figure 5: Average length of stay for hospital in-patients, 2016 and 2021 (days) Source: Eurostat (hlth_co_inpst)

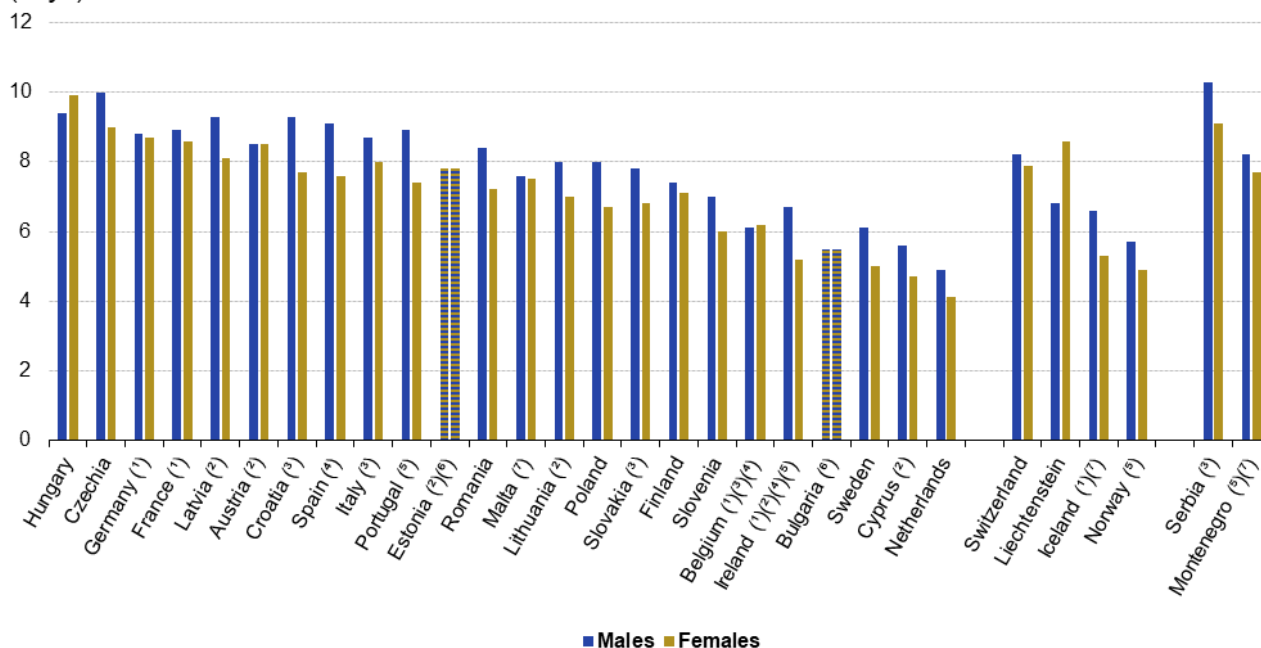
Comparing the average length of stay in 2021 (or latest year) with the situation in 2016, around a third of the EU Member States – 9 out of 24 (incomplete data for Denmark, Greece and Luxembourg) – observed a decrease in the average length of days spent in hospital by in-patients. The largest decrease was in Finland, where the average fell from 8.6 days to 7.3 days between 2016 and 2021. By contrast, 13 Member States recorded an increase during this period. The largest increases were in Latvia (up from 7.6 to 8.6 days) and Spain (up from 7.0 to 8.3 days). Consequently, there were two Member States where there was no change in the average length of stay for hospital in-patients: France and Slovakia.

Males generally spent longer than females in hospital

Although there were generally more female in-patients than male in-patients (see Figure 3), in most of the EU Member States the average length of stay for male in-patients in 2021 was generally longer than for females. The main exception to this pattern, as can be seen from Figure 6, was Hungary, although there was also a slightly longer average stay for females in Belgium. By contrast, in 12 Member States the average length of stay was at least 1.0 days longer for males than for females; the largest difference was in Croatia (2020 data), where males stayed 1.6 days longer on average.

Average length of stay for hospital in-patients, by sex, 2021

(days)



Note: ranked on the average length of stay for all hospital in-patients (both sexes). Denmark, Greece and Luxembourg: not available.

(1) Excluding some or all long-stay hospitals.

(2) Excluding liveborn infants.

(3) 2020.

(4) Excluding some or all psychiatric hospitals or mental health care institutions.

(5) Public sector hospitals only.

(6) Data only available for the total (male and female combined).

(7) 2019.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hlth_co_inpst)

eurostat

Figure 6: Average length of stay for hospital in-patients, by sex, 2021 (days) Source: Eurostat (hlth_co_inpst)

The average length of in-patient stays tended to be shortest for children aged 1–9 years and highest for people aged 85 years or over

A detailed age group analysis of the average length of in-patient hospital stays in 2021 is presented in Table 5.

- The average length of stay was generally lower for young children aged 1–4 years and 5–9 years than it was for the youngest age group, in other words infants aged less than 1 year. Czechia, Germany, Italy (2020 data), Lithuania and Portugal were exceptions among the EU Member States, as was Iceland (2019 data) among non-EU countries.
- Between the age groups 5–9 years and 10–14 years there was an increase in the average length of stay in all Member States. The average then remained relatively stable through to the age group 30–34 years.
- Thereafter, the average length of in-patient stays generally increased through each age group: in 18 of the 22 Member States for which data are available, it peaked in one of the three oldest age groups.

There were four EU Member States where the longest average length of stay was not among older people. In Cyprus (2018 data) and Sweden, the longest average stays were recorded among the youngest age group (children aged less than 1 year). In Germany and Croatia (2020 data), the longest average length of stay was recorded for the age group 55–59 years. Among the non-member countries included in the table, Norway was also an exception to the general rule, with its longest average length of stay among people aged 20–24 years.

Austria had the biggest difference in average length of stay between the age groups, with an average of 3.3 days for children aged 1–4 years rising up to an average of 20.1 days for people aged 95 years or over, a gap of 16.8 days. Large gaps in the average length of stays by age were also observed in Hungary, Czechia and Malta (2019 data).

Average length of stay for hospital in-patients, by age group, 2021
(days)

	Age group																					
	< 1 year	1-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	15-19 years	20-24 years	25-29 years	30-34 years	35-39 years	40-44 years	45-49 years	50-54 years	55-59 years	60-64 years	65-69 years	70-74 years	75-79 years	80-84 years	85-89 years	90-94 years	≥ 95 years	
Belgium (*) ^(*)	4.0	2.9	2.8	3.2	3.1	3.0	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.6	3.9	4.4	5.0	5.8	6.5	7.4	8.6	10.4	12.1	13.1	12.9	
Bulgaria
Czechia	4.6	3.8	5.3	6.9	6.6	6.8	6.1	6.1	7.1	8.0	8.4	9.2	9.8	10.5	10.7	11.3	12.4	14.2	16.4	17.6	16.9	
Denmark
Germany (*)	4.2	4.3	7.4	9.3	9.0	8.0	6.8	6.6	7.9	9.1	9.7	10.2	10.4	9.9	8.8	8.9	9.2	9.3	9.4	9.0	8.2	
Estonia
Ireland (*) ^(*) ^(*)	5.7	2.3	2.5	3.1	3.0	2.7	2.7	2.9	3.1	3.8	4.7	5.3	6.1	6.7	7.4	8.2	9.2	10.3	11.3	12.0	12.5	
Greece
Spain (*)	6.6	3.6	3.5	4.5	5.8	5.2	4.8	4.6	5.1	6.3	7.1	7.9	8.5	9.0	9.1	9.8	10.1	10.5	11.1	11.3	12.8	
France (*)	4.6	3.0	3.5	6.0	7.5	7.0	6.2	6.0	7.0	8.2	9.2	9.6	9.6	9.2	9.2	9.4	9.9	11.1	12.3	12.9	12.6	
Croatia (*)	5.1	4.7	5.1	5.6	6.2	6.5	6.0	6.1	7.2	9.1	9.9	9.8	10.1	9.7	9.3	9.2	9.7	9.7	9.7	9.3	8.9	
Italy (*)	4.4	5.0	4.7	5.1	6.0	5.5	4.9	4.7	5.1	6.2	7.2	7.9	8.4	8.9	9.3	9.8	10.6	11.1	11.4	11.0	10.3	
Cyprus (*)	7.7	2.9	3.2	3.3	5.1	5.3	5.5	5.8	5.8	5.7	6.4	6.1	6.1	6.5	6.7	6.7	6.9	7.2	7.0	6.7	7.5	
Latvia (*)	7.0	4.2	4.6	6.6	6.2	6.0	5.5	6.8	7.7	8.5	9.6	7.9	8.2	9.9	9.0	9.5	10.7	10.8	11.8	9.0	8.7	
Lithuania (*)	4.6	4.7	5.5	6.8	6.6	6.0	5.6	5.9	6.4	7.4	7.6	7.8	7.8	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.6	8.9	9.2	9.0	8.5	
Luxembourg
Hungary	4.3	3.2	3.2	4.0	4.7	5.7	5.5	5.8	6.6	8.1	9.2	10.1	10.7	11.2	10.7	11.2	12.8	15.1	18.5	18.6	18.1	
Malta (*)	3.7	2.7	3.3	4.2	6.4	5.1	5.5	5.0	5.1	5.9	7.2	7.8	7.2	7.4	7.5	7.8	9.2	12.4	13.8	15.2	12.7	
Netherlands	3.6	3.6	2.9	3.3	3.5	3.1	2.8	2.8	3.1	3.6	4.0	4.3	4.6	4.8	5.1	5.2	5.2	5.5	5.8	6.2	6.4	
Austria (*)	7.2	3.3	3.9	6.0	5.6	5.5	5.2	5.6	6.5	7.4	8.1	8.7	8.9	8.6	8.9	9.1	9.5	10.1	11.4	13.1	20.1	
Poland	4.7	3.9	4.0	5.8	7.0	6.9	6.3	6.6	7.6	8.1	8.0	8.0	8.1	7.9	7.8	7.8	8.1	8.6	8.8	8.7	8.3	
Portugal (*)	4.1	4.3	4.0	5.0	5.5	5.1	4.7	4.7	5.0	6.4	7.2	8.0	8.5	8.9	9.2	9.6	10.3	10.9	11.1	10.4	9.7	
Romania	5.1	4.4	4.4	5.1	5.2	5.4	5.9	6.1	7.4	8.4	8.8	8.9	9.0	8.8	8.5	8.6	8.8	9.3	10.0	10.2	10.7	
Slovenia	3.9	2.6	3.0	4.0	5.1	5.0	4.4	4.5	5.1	5.8	6.3	6.8	7.4	7.8	7.8	8.1	8.8	9.2	9.7	9.4	8.7	
Slovakia (*)	5.3	4.4	4.1	6.0	5.7	6.0	6.0	6.2	6.7	7.4	7.8	7.8	7.9	7.7	7.9	8.0	8.4	9.0	9.5	9.5	9.3	
Finland	5.7	2.7	4.2	7.5	7.5	8.2	6.3	5.8	5.7	6.5	6.4	5.6	5.7	5.8	6.4	6.7	7.5	8.5	9.6	11.6	12.1	
Sweden	6.9	3.4	3.3	4.3	5.2	5.4	4.9	4.9	5.8	6.1	6.1	6.0	5.9	5.7	5.4	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.4	5.5	5.4	
Iceland (*) ^(*)	2.3	2.8	3.2	4.3	4.9	3.9	3.4	3.1	3.6	4.5	4.9	5.1	5.3	6.2	6.7	7.8	8.8	10.8	12.1	13.8	13.4	
Norway (*)	3.5	3.0	3.2	4.9	6.0	6.9	6.3	6.0	6.4	6.8	6.2	5.7	5.5	5.1	5.0	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.7	4.6	4.2	
Switzerland	4.1	3.0	3.6	7.7	9.7	8.9	7.0	6.3	7.1	8.0	8.4	8.5	8.3	8.1	8.3	8.6	9.2	9.6	10.1	10.3	10.2	
Serbia (*)	10.4	6.3	6.1	7.2	6.9	6.8	6.6	6.9	8.4	10.2	10.8	11.1	11.2	10.8	10.4	10.3	10.3	10.6	10.2	10.3	12.6	

(*) 2020.

(*) Excluding some or all long-stay hospitals.

(*) Excluding some or all psychiatric hospitals or mental health care institutions.

(*) Public sector hospitals only.

(*) Excluding liveborn infants.

(*) 2018.

(*) 2019.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hlth_co_inpst)

Table 5: Average length of stay for hospital in-patients, by age group, 2021 (days) Source: Eurostat (hlth_co_inpst)

In-patients with mental and behavioural disorders generally spent the longest time in hospital per stay

Among the nine diagnoses presented in Table 6, the average length of stay for in-patients in 2021 was notably longer for mental and behavioural disorders. Note that in several EU Member States, the data presented in Table 6 exclude discharges from some or all psychiatric hospitals or mental health care institutions. The longest average stays for in-patients with mental and behavioural disorders were reported for Spain and Czechia, where the average stays were 53.1 and 43.4 days, respectively. Among the other diagnoses, average stays were generally longest for patients being diagnosed or receiving treatment for: diseases of the respiratory system; diseases of the circulatory system; injury, poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes; or neoplasms.

Average length of stay for hospital in-patients, by disease/injury, 2021

(days)

	Neoplasms	Mental and behavioural disorders	Diseases of the circulatory system	Diseases of the respiratory system	Diseases of the digestive system	Diseases of the musculo-skeletal system and connective tissue	Diseases of the genitourinary system	Pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium	Injury, poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes
Belgium (*) ^(*)	7.1	9.4	7.1	8.7	5.1	5.6	4.7	3.4	8.6
Bulgaria	4.6	35.2	4.1	6.5	4.1	4.5	3.6	3.9	4.2
Czechia	7.1	43.4	10.0	12.0	6.1	9.1	5.6	3.8	9.1
Denmark	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Germany (*)	8.2	26.9	8.9	8.6	5.6	10.5	5.2	3.5	7.8
Estonia	7.4	15.7	10.3	8.5	5.3	6.5	6.1	3.0	8.3
Ireland (*) ^(*)	9.6	11.6	7.8	8.0	6.1	5.2	6.1	2.6	7.0
Greece	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Spain (*)	7.7	53.1	8.5	7.2	5.6	4.7	5.0	3.0	7.7
France (*)	6.8	24.2	6.3	6.3	5.2	5.2	4.6	4.2	5.3
Croatia	6.4	28.0	7.1	9.2	6.1	10.3	5.5	4.3	7.1
Italy	7.7	14.1	9.3	10.8	6.7	6.0	5.7	3.7	9.7
Cyprus	4.6	12.3	5.3	7.1	3.5	3.4	4.0	3.0	5.0
Latvia	7.1	24.9	8.2	8.9	6.5	7.6	4.8	4.0	6.4
Lithuania	6.7	19.6	8.5	8.7	4.9	6.3	4.8	3.8	7.4
Luxembourg	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Hungary	5.9	31.3	11.1	8.1	5.7	10.1	6.7	4.1	6.7
Malta (*)	11.5	37.9	9.3	8.8	5.3	5.8	6.0	2.6	8.0
Netherlands	4.8	9.5	5.3	5.2	4.3	2.9	3.6	2.5	5.1
Austria	6.5	26.7	10.4	8.2	5.0	9.6	5.2	3.7	7.5
Poland	5.6	36.6	6.7	6.9	5.0	7.9	4.5	4.4	5.4
Portugal (*)	8.7	20.0	9.5	8.9	6.9	6.1	7.0	3.4	10.3
Romania	6.0	23.5	7.4	9.0	5.6	7.9	4.6	4.2	6.4
Slovenia	6.5	23.4	7.4	9.1	5.2	5.4	4.6	3.7	6.5
Slovakia	6.7	28.5	6.5	8.5	5.5	7.0	5.0	4.6	5.9
Finland	6.6	20.5	8.0	6.1	4.4	4.6	5.0	3.1	7.9
Sweden	6.2	15.6	5.1	5.3	4.3	3.3	4.1	2.5	4.7
Iceland (*) ^(*)	7.6	11.2	8.7	7.1	4.8	4.6	4.1	1.9	8.1
Liechtenstein	4.6	33.3	4.4	5.8	4.0	5.7	2.7	1.6	4.1
Norway (*)	5.2	17.7	4.3	5.2	3.9	3.4	3.5	2.2	3.9
Switzerland	7.6	26.9	8.3	7.7	5.3	6.9	3.9	3.7	6.8
Montenegro (*) ^(*)	5.9	34.9	7.4	7.3	5.5	10.9	5.1	5.2	9.1
Serbia	7.0	57.6	7.7	10.6	6.1	9.8	5.3	5.0	9.0

(*) 2020.

(*) Excluding some or all long-stay hospitals.

(*) Excluding some or all psychiatric hospitals or mental health care institutions.

(*) Public sector hospitals only.

(*) 2019.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hlth_co_inpst)

eurostat 

Table 6: Average length of stay for hospital in-patients, by disease/injury, 2021 (days) Source: Eurostat (hlth_co_inpst)

For several of the diagnoses shown in Table 6 there was a relatively high degree of uniformity in the average length of stay in 2021 reported by each EU Member State. For example, in-patients diagnosed with diseases of the digestive system spent, on average, between 3.5 days (in Cyprus) and 6.9 days (in Portugal) in hospital; patients diagnosed with diseases of the genitourinary system and those in hospital for pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium, also had a relatively narrow range in the average lengths of stay across the Member States.

For injury, poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes, as well as for diseases of the respiratory system, neoplasms, diseases of the circulatory system, and diseases of the musculo-skeletal system and connective tissue, the average length of stay for in-patients in 2021 was somewhat more diverse. The range between the shortest and longest average stays across the EU Member States was between 6 and 8 days.

For mental and behavioural disorders, the average length of stay varied even more, although this is influenced to some extent by the fact that the length of stay of patients in some or all psychiatric hospitals or mental health care institutions are excluded in several Member States. The shortest average stay was 9.4 days as recorded in Belgium (2020 data) while the longest in 2021, as noted above, was 53.1 days in Spain, a difference of 43.7 days.

Source data for tables and graphs

- [Hospital discharges and length of stay: tables and figures](#)

Key concepts

Data sources

An in-patient is a patient who is formally admitted (or 'hospitalised') to an institution for diagnosis, treatment and/or care and stays for a minimum of one night or more than 24 hours in the hospital or other institution providing in-patient care. In contrast to in-patient care, the intention for day care is to discharge the patient on the same day as admitted. Day care comprises planned medical and paramedical services delivered to patients who have been formally admitted for diagnosis, treatment or other types of health care.

An in-patient or day care patient is discharged from hospital when formally released after a procedure or course of treatment (episode of care). A discharge may occur because of the finalisation of treatment, signing out against medical advice, transfer to another healthcare institution, or because of death.

The average length of stay of in-patients in hospitals is computed by first calculating the number of hospital days (or bed-days or in-patient days) from the date of admission to an in-patient institution as the date of discharge minus date of admission, and then dividing this by the number of discharges during the year.

Statistics on healthcare activities such as information on discharges and average length of stay are documented in this [background article](#) which provides information on the scope of the data, its legal basis, the methodology employed, as well as related concepts and definitions.

The [Healthcare non-expenditure statistics manual](#) provides an overview of the classifications, both for mandatory variables and variables provided on voluntary basis.

The main diagnosis for discharges is based on the [International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems \(ICD-10\)](#) . The diagnoses presented in this article include the following.

- C00–D48 Neoplasms
- F00–F99 Mental and behavioural disorders
- I00–I99 Diseases of the circulatory system
- J00–J99 Diseases of the respiratory system
- K00–K93 Diseases of the digestive system
- M00–M99 Diseases of the musculo-skeletal system and connective tissue
- N00–N99 Diseases of the genitourinary system
- O00–O99 Pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium
- S00–T98 Injury, poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes

For country specific notes on the collection of healthcare non-expenditure statistics, please refer to the annexes at the end of the national metadata reports accessible from links at the beginning of the [European metadata report](#) . Data do not always cover all hospitals, treatments or types of patients. The main exceptions noted for 2021 data (or the latest available year when 2021 data are not available) by EU Member States and non-EU countries are listed below.

Tables in this article use the following notation

Value is : for not available. <context>

Types of institutions	Main exception(s)
Belgium	Excludes long-stay hospitals (covers only acute care hospitals) and psychiatric/mental health hospitals
Germany	Excludes prevention and rehabilitation facilities with 100 or fewer beds
Ireland	Excludes private hospitals, long-stay hospitals (covers only acute care hospitals) and psychiatric/mental health hospitals
Spain	Day cases: excludes psychiatric and long-stay hospitals unless they form a hospital complex
France	Excludes long-term care hospitals
Croatia	Excludes prison hospitals
Italy and Poland	Excludes military hospitals
Lithuania and Romania	Excludes hospitals that do not have a contract with the national health insurance fund
The Netherlands	Excludes private and semi-private hospitals, the military hospital, mental health and substance abuse hospitals, epilepsy clinics and long-stay hospitals (covers only acute care hospitals)
Portugal, Norway and Montenegro	Excludes private hospitals
Slovenia	Excludes rehabilitative care in specialised centres
Iceland	Excludes specialised institutions such as rehabilitation centres, nursing homes or residential care facilities
Switzerland	Excludes prison and military hospitals
Serbia	Excludes prison hospitals and military hospitals as well as some private hospitals
Types of activity / treatment	Main exception(s)
The Netherlands	Excludes part-time psychiatric treatments in general or university hospitals with a psychiatric ward; rehabilitation day-treatment; day care admissions for normal deliveries of babies
Types of patient	Main exception(s)
Belgium (184 days), Italy (365 days), Lithuania (120 days for nursing hospitals) and Slovakia (700 days)	Excludes long-term patients
France and Luxembourg	Excludes non-residents

Context

Statistics on hospital discharges and the average length of hospital stays reflect the balance between the demand for and supply of hospital services. They represent how many patients were actually admitted (as in-patients or day care patients) and how long they were treated; they can be complemented by other supply side statistics such as occupancy rates (see an article on [hospital beds](#)), the frequency of [operations and procedures](#) , [healthcare expenditure](#) , as well as demand side statistics (see an article on [unmet medical needs](#)).

The balance between in-patient and day care patient discharges, as well as the number of out-patients and the average length of hospital stays, reflect a number of factors:

- demographic changes such as an ageing population which pushes up demand for hospital services;
- budgetary pressures to keep costs down; and
- changes in practices and technology impacting on the length of acute care and/or the balance between in-patient care, day care and out-patient care.

The [European core health indicators \(ECHI\)](#) shortlist includes indicators on hospital in-patient discharges, hospital day cases and average length of stay in the chapter on health services. </context>

Explore further

Other articles

Online publications

- [Health in the European Union – facts and figures](#)
- [Disability statistics](#)

Healthcare activities and expenditure

- [Beds](#)
- [Consultations](#)
- [Healthcare expenditure](#)
- [Surgical operations and procedures](#)
- [Unmet needs for health care](#)

Methodology

- [Healthcare non-expenditure](#)

General health statistics articles

- [Health statistics introduced](#)
- [Health statistics at regional level](#)

Database

- [Health](#) (hlth)

Health care (hlth_care)

Health care activities (hlth_act)

Hospital discharges and length of stay for in-patient curative care (hlth_co_inpagg)

Hospital discharges - national data (hlth_hosd)

Hospital discharges by diagnosis, in-patients, total number (hlth_co_disch1)

Hospital discharges by diagnosis, in-patients, per 100 000 inhabitants (hlth_co_disch2)

Hospital discharges by diagnosis, day cases, total number (hlth_co_disch3)

Hospital discharges by diagnosis, day cases, per 100 000 inhabitants (hlth_co_disch4)

Length of stay in hospital (hlth_hostay)

In-patient average length of stay (days) (hlth_co_inpst)

Dedicated section

- [Health](#)

Main tables

- [Health \(t_hlth\)](#)

Health care (t_hlth_care)

Discharges from hospitals (tps00048)

Methodology

Manuals and guidelines

- [Healthcare non-expenditure statistics manual – Guidelines for completing the Joint questionnaire on non-monetary healthcare statistics – 2023 edition](#)

Metadata

- [Healthcare non-expenditure statistics](#) (ESMS metadata file – hlth_res_esms)

External links

- [European Commission – Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety – Public health](#) , see:
 - [European core health indicators \(ECHI\)](#)
 - [Health systems performance assessment](#)
- [OECD – Health policies and data](#)
- [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) , see:
 - [WHO – Health system governance](#)
 - [WHO – The Global Health Observatory](#)