



Press release

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14 Health

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Mortality statistics

Flu surge led to more deaths at start of 2015

Neuchâtel, 11.05.2015 (FSO) – **In the first weeks of this year, many more people died in Switzerland than was expected. This period of excess mortality coincided with the peak of the last wave of flu. The Federal Statistical Office (FSO) will from now on publish weekly death figures on its website.**

Between the second and twelfth weeks of this year, an estimated 2200 estimated deaths or 17% more than would be expected from previous years' figures took place in Switzerland. The excess mortality affected almost exclusively people over 65. When interpreting the figures it is important to note that throughout the whole of 2014, some 65,000 deaths occurred, which was 1600 fewer than expected.

This period of excess mortality coincided with the simultaneously observed influenza outbreak. A connection with the flu is, therefore, certain, although flu is only rarely specified on death certificates as the direct cause of death. Other factors often have an influence, such as cold weather or other viral diseases. Influenza activity is described during the winter months in the Bulletin of the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) in the seasonal flu section (bag.admin.ch > [Documentation](#) > [Publications](#) > [BAG Bulletin](#), available in German and French).

The Federal Statistical Office monitors the number of deaths in Switzerland, while the Federal Office of Public Health is responsible for influenza surveillance and prevention (see: national strategy for flu prevention (GRIPS) (bag.admin.ch > [Saisonale Grippe](#) > [Mit GRIPS gegen die Grippe](#), available in German and French).

From now on, the FSO will publish the estimated number of weekly deaths on its website once a week, usually on Tuesdays (bfs.admin.ch > [Topics](#) > [14 - Health](#) > [health of the population](#) > [mortality, causes of death](#) > [Data, Indicators](#) > [Deaths: Number, trends and causes](#)).

SWISS FEDERAL STATISTICAL OFFICE
Press Office

Methods

Each death in Switzerland must be registered at the competent regional civil registry office. These data are transferred to the FSO so that it knows the number of deaths reported daily. Assuming a constant flow of notification, actual numbers of deaths are extrapolated for the past month from the daily figures reported. These "observed" numbers are compared with the "*expected" numbers. The expected values are calculated from the number of deaths of the previous 10 years. This calculation is not simply an average value, but takes into account the change in population from year to year. For each expected value, a range is calculated within which fluctuations are considered to be random.

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Further information and publications in electronic form are available on the FSO homepage:
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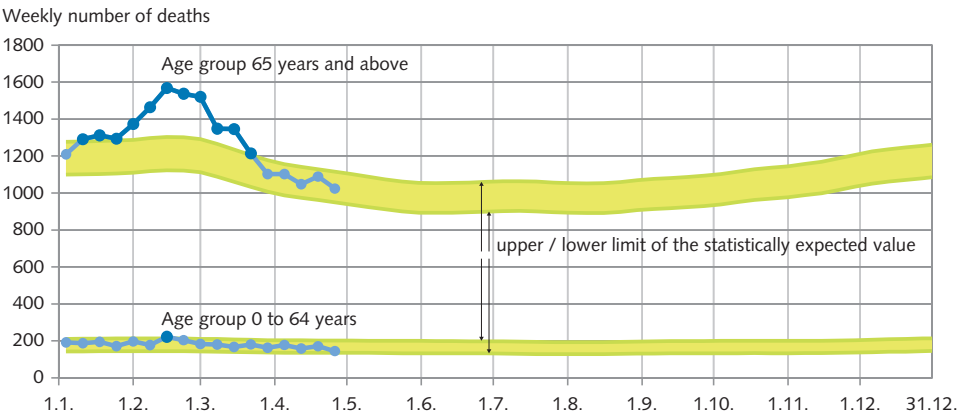
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This press release is published in agreement with the Federal for Public Health (FOPH).

Continuous registration of deaths in 2015



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