Health and safety at work
Summary statistics for Great Britain 2020
## Key facts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.6 million</th>
<th><strong>0.8 million</strong></th>
<th><strong>0.5 million</strong></th>
<th><strong>£10.6 billion</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work-related ill health cases (new or long-standing) in 2019/20</td>
<td>Work-related stress, depression or anxiety cases (new or long-standing) in 2019/20</td>
<td>Work-related musculoskeletal disorder cases (new or long-standing) in 2019/20</td>
<td>Annual costs of new cases of work-related ill health in 2018/19, excluding long-latency illness such as cancer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Source: Estimates based on self-reports from the Labour Force Survey, people who worked in the last 12 months</td>
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<tr>
<th>0.7 million</th>
<th><strong>65,427</strong></th>
<th><strong>111</strong></th>
<th><strong>£5.6 billion</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workers sustaining a non-fatal injury in 2019/20</td>
<td>Non-fatal injuries to employees reported by employers in 2019/20</td>
<td>Fatal injuries to workers in 2019/20</td>
<td>Annual costs of workplace injury in 2018/19</td>
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<td>Source: Estimates based on self-reports from the Labour Force Survey</td>
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<tr>
<th>38.8 million</th>
<th><strong>12,000</strong></th>
<th><strong>2,446</strong></th>
<th><strong>£16.2 billion</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Working days lost due to work-related ill health and non-fatal workplace injuries in 2019/20</td>
<td>Lung disease deaths each year estimated to be linked to past exposures at work</td>
<td>Mesothelioma deaths in 2018 with a similar number of lung cancer deaths linked to past exposures to asbestos</td>
<td>Annual costs of work-related injury and new cases of ill health in 2018/19, excluding long-latency illness such as cancer</td>
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<td>Source: Estimates based on self-reports from the Labour Force Survey</td>
<td>Source: Counts from mesothelioma and other death certificates and estimates from epidemiological information</td>
<td>Source: Mesothelioma death certificates</td>
<td>Source: Estimates based on HSE Costs to Britain Model</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Work-related ill health**

**1.6 million**
Workers suffering from work-related ill health (new or long-standing) in 2019/20

**638,000**
Workers suffering from a new case of work-related ill health in 2019/20

**32.5 million**
Working days lost due to work-related ill health in 2019/20

**13,000**
Deaths each year estimated to be linked to past exposure at work, primarily to chemicals or dust

The rate of self-reported work-related ill health has been broadly flat in recent years, although 2019/20 is above recent rates.

Similarly, working days lost per worker due to self-reported work-related illness has been broadly flat in recent years, although 2019/20 is above recent rates.

Estimates of ill health based on Labour Force Survey (LFS) self-reports and deaths based on counts from death certificates and estimates from epidemiological information.

To find out the story behind the key figures, visit [https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causdis/](https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causdis/)
Work-related stress, depression or anxiety

**828,000**
Workers suffering from work-related stress, depression or anxiety (new or long-standing) in 2019/20

**347,000**
Workers suffering from a new case of work-related stress, depression or anxiety in 2019/20

**17.9 million**
Working days lost due to work-related stress, depression or anxiety in 2019/20

The rate of self-reported work-related stress, depression or anxiety has increased in recent years.

Working days lost per worker due to self-reported work-related stress, depression or anxiety shows no clear trend.

Workload, lack of support, violence, threats or bullying and changes at work are estimated to be the main causes of work-related stress, depression or anxiety based on 2009/10-2011/12 LFS data.

Estimates of work-related stress, depression or anxiety based on self-reports from the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

To find out the story behind the key figures, visit [https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causdis/](https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causdis/).
Work-related musculoskeletal disorders

480,000
Workers suffering from work-related musculoskeletal disorders (new or long-standing) in 2019/20

152,000
Workers suffering from a new case of work-related musculoskeletal disorder in 2019/20

8.9 million
Working days lost due to work-related musculoskeletal disorders in 2019/20

Musculoskeletal disorders by affected area, 2019/20
- 19% Lower limbs (93,000)
- 44% Upper limbs or neck (212,000)
- 37% Back (176,000)

Industries with higher than average rates of musculoskeletal disorders, averaged 2017/18–2019/20
- Agriculture, forestry and fishing* 2,030
- Construction 2,020
- Human health and social work 1,420
- All industries 1,130
* Based on fewer than 30 sample cases

Musculoskeletal disorders per 100,000 workers: new and long-standing

The rate of self-reported work-related musculoskeletal disorders showed a generally downward trend.

Similarly, working days lost per worker due to self-reported work-related musculoskeletal disorders showed a generally downward trend.

Manual handling, awkward or tiring positions and keyboard work or repetitive action are estimated to be the main causes of work-related musculoskeletal disorders based on 2009/10-2011/12 LFS data.

Estimates of work-related musculoskeletal disorders based on self-reports from the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

To find out the story behind the key figures, visit https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causdis/
Occupational lung disease

12,000
Lung disease deaths each year estimated to be linked to past exposures at work

2,446
Mesothelioma deaths in 2018, with a similar number of lung cancer deaths linked to past exposures to asbestos

17,000
Estimated new cases of breathing or lung problems caused or made worse by work each year on average over the last three years according to self-reports from the Labour Force Survey

Occupational lung diseases account for around 12,000 of the 13,000 total annual deaths estimated to be linked to past exposures at work.

There were 174 new cases of occupational asthma seen by chest physicians in 2019, with evidence of an increase in the rate of new cases over recent years.

To find out the story behind the key figures, visit https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causdis/respiratory-diseases.pdf

Shaded area represents a 95% confidence interval
Workers killed at work in 2019/20

Workers sustaining a non-fatal injury according to self-reports from the Labour Force Survey in 2019/20

Employee non-fatal injuries reported by employers under RIDDOR in 2019/20

Estimated working days lost due to non-fatal workplace injuries according to self-reports from the Labour Force Survey in 2019/20

The rate of fatal injury showed a generally downward trend but has been broadly flat in recent years.

The rate of self-reported non-fatal injury to workers showed a generally downward trend but has been broadly flat in recent years.

The rate of non-fatal injury to employees reported by employers shows a downward trend.

Self-reported estimates of non-fatal injuries are based on the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

To find out the story behind the key figures, visit http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causinj/index.htm
Costs to Britain

£16.2 billion
Annual costs of work-related injury and ill health in 2018/19, excluding long-latency illness such as cancer.

£10.6 billion
Annual costs of new cases of work-related ill health in 2018/19, excluding long-latency illness such as cancer.

£5.6 billion
Annual costs of workplace injury in 2018/19.


Costs to Britain of workplace injury and new cases of work-related ill health in 2018/19 by:
- **type of incident**:
  - 34% Injury
  - 66% Ill health
- **cost bearer**:
  - £3.2 billion Employers
  - £3.5 billion Government
  - £9.6 billion Individuals

Total costs include financial costs and human costs. Financial costs cover loss of output, healthcare costs and other payments made. Human costs are the monetary valuation given to pain, grief, suffering and loss of life.

To find out the story behind the key figures, visit [https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/cost.htm](https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/cost.htm)

For estimates of the costs of work-related cancer in Great Britain visit [https://www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrhtm/rr1074.htm](https://www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrhtm/rr1074.htm)

Shaded area represents a 95% confidence interval.
No costs estimate is available for 2011/12 represented by a dashed line.
Industries with ill health rates statistically significantly higher than the rate for all industries were public administration and defence, human health and social work and education.

Agriculture, forestry and fishing, construction, accommodation and food service activities, manufacturing and wholesale and retail trade (including motor vehicle repair) had statistically significantly higher injury rates than for all industries.

To find out the story behind the key figures, visit [www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/industry](http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/industry)
**European comparisons**

**Fatal injuries in large EU economies (Eurostat 2017)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Standardised incidence rate per 100,000 employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU-28</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The UK consistently has one of the lowest standardised rates of fatal injury across the EU, lower than other large economies and the EU average.

**Self-reported work-related injuries resulting in sick leave (EU Labour Force Survey 2013)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage of workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Methodological problems mean that Germany is excluded from this comparison, and as a result, a figure for EU-28 is also not available.

**Self-reported work-related health problems resulting in sick leave (EU Labour Force Survey 2013)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU-28</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Non-fatal injuries in the UK were at a similar level to other large economies in 2013. Rates of work-related ill health resulting in sick leave were lower than most other EU countries.

This data relates to when the UK was a member of the EU.

To find out the story behind the key figures, visit [www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/european](http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/european/).
Enforcement

325
Cases prosecuted, or referred to COPFS for prosecution in Scotland, by HSE where a conviction was achieved in 2019/20

7,075
Notices issued by HSE in 2019/20

£35.8 million
In fines resulting from prosecutions taken, or referred to COPFS for prosecution in Scotland, by HSE where a conviction was achieved in 2019/20

This year has seen a fall in the number of cases prosecuted, continuing the trend from the previous year.

The number of notices issued by HSE showed a decrease compared to the previous year, continuing the long-term downward trend in notices issued.

The level of fine issued in 2019/20 has decreased compared to the previous year. The average fine per conviction is significantly lower as well. This was £110,000, compared to £150,000 in 2018/19.

Find out the story behind the key figures, visit [http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/enforcement.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/enforcement.htm)
Sources

The Labour Force Survey (LFS)
The LFS is a national survey run by the Office for National Statistics. Currently around 33,000 households are surveyed each quarter. HSE commissions annual questions in the LFS to gain a view of self-reported work-related illness and workplace injury based on individuals' perceptions. The analysis and interpretation of these data are the sole responsibility of HSE.

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)
Requirements under which fatal, over-seven-day and specified non-fatal injuries to workers are reported by employers.

Specialist physician and general practitioner reporting (THOR)
Cases of work-related respiratory and skin disease are reported by specialist physicians within The Health and Occupation Research network (THOR).

Death certificates
Some occupational lung diseases, including the asbestos-related diseases mesothelioma and asbestosis, can be identified from the recorded cause of death.

Enforcement
Due to the impact of COVID-19, data collection for notices issued by local authorities was not possible for this year's publication. The enforcing authorities are HSE, local authorities and, in Scotland, the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS). In Scotland, HSE and local authorities investigate potential offences but cannot institute legal proceedings and the COPFS makes the final decision on whether to institute legal proceedings and which offences are taken.

HSE Costs to Britain Model
Developed to estimate the economic costs of injury and new cases of ill health arising largely from current working conditions. The economic cost estimate includes both financial and human costs.

Eurostat
Eurostat (the statistical section of the European Commission) publishes data on fatal accidents at work. Fatality rates are standardised to take account of the different industrial structure of employment across European Union member states and exclude road traffic accidents and accidents on board of any mean of transport in the course of work.

European Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS)
A large household survey carried out in the member states of the European Union. In 2013 the EU-LFS included an ad-hoc module asking about accidents at work and work-related health problems in the previous 12 months.


More information about our data sources can be found at: www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/sources.htm
Definitions

Rate per 100,000  The number of annual injuries or cases of ill health per 100,000 employees or workers, either overall or for a particular industry.

95% confidence Interval  The range of values which we are 95% confident contains the true value, in the absence of bias. This reflects the potential error that results from surveying a sample rather than the entire population.

Statistical significance  A difference between two sample estimates is described as 'statistically significant' if there is a less than 5% chance that it is due to sampling error alone.

Standard Industrial Classification (SIC)  The system used in UK official statistics for classifying business by the type of activity they are engaged in. The current version is SIC 2007. Industry estimates presented here are at SIC Section level.

National Statistics
The LFS, RIDDOR, deaths from occupational lung disease, THOR, enforcement and Costs to Britain figures in this report are National Statistics.

National Statistics status means that statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value. They are produced in compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and awarded National Statistics status following assessment and compliance checks by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). The last compliance check of these statistics was in 2013.

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Contact  simon.clarke@hse.gov.uk
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Next update  November 2021

More information about our data sources can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/sources.htm

HSE’s statistics revisions policy can be seen at www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/about/revisions/index.htm

Data tables can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/tables/

For information regarding the quality guidelines used for statistics within HSE see www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/about/quality-guidelines.htm