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PQ Ref 13354/21

To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons that died by suicide in each of the years 2017 to 2020, by CHO area; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy,

The HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP) has been requested to respond to your question above.

All provisional and official data on suicide deaths, is publicly available on the Central Statistics Office website, www.cso.ie. You might be particularly interested in their [PxStat](#) portal or [Vital Statics](#) tables.

In Ireland, the decision as to whether someone has died by suicide is a *legal* determination made by Coroners, *not* a medical decision by doctors or the HSE.

Death due to intentional self-harm is classified as an unnatural death and therefore, must be referred to the Coroner for investigation. This investigation can take a protracted length of time to complete for various reasons (such as getting medical reports, health and safety reports, engineer's report, the involvement of the Director of Public Prosecutions etc.) and this delays the registration of such deaths.

Thereafter, data is published by the CSO in three stages;

1. Provided firstly by year of registration – “provisional”
2. Revised later, by year of occurrence – “official”
3. Revised later again, to include “late registrations”.

Deaths by suicide 2017 to 2020, by CHO

For your convenience, we have summarised CSO information below.

	2017	2018	2019	2020 Q1-Q3 Only
Total	383 National total including late registrations is 447 . Late registrations are not published by county.	437 Official, year of occurrence data, excluding late registrations	421 Provisional, year of registration data, excluding late registrations	191 Provisional, year of registration data, excluding late registrations
Leinster				
Carlow	8	5	3	
South Dublin	8	12	11	
Dublin City	24	15	17	
Fingal	7	14	12	
Dun Lgh. Rdown	5	6	7	
Kildare	17	21	21	
Kilkenny	9	10	10	
Laois	9	6	6	
Longford	2	2	2	
Louth	11	10	11	
Meath	17	21	21	
Offaly	8	11	8	
Westmeath	6	10	7	
Wexford	14	25	22	
Wicklow	15	8	10	
Munster				
Clare	20	16	12	
Cork City	11	16	16	
Cork County	40	40	45	
Kerry	11	25	20	
Limerick City	7	9	13	
Limerick County	20	21	17	
Tipperary	n/a	26	29	
North Tipperary	12	n/a	n/a	
South Tipperary	7	n/a	n/a	
Waterford City	4	4	4	
Waterford County	11	10	7	
Connacht				
Galway City	10	11	11	
Galway County	16	17	17	
Leitrim	2	4	3	
Mayo	8	15	11	
Roscommon	4	9	11	
Sligo	6	6	5	
Ulster (part of)				
Cavan	11	14	14	
Donegal	14	9	11	
Monaghan	9	9	7	

These figures have not been presented by CHO for you, as there are differences between how CHOs are configured and the CSO data by county - for example, in the case of counties Tipperary and Wicklow. I trust the county information will be helpful for you nonetheless.

To date, the CSO has published 2020 data to Quarter 3. Such [quarterly publications](#) do not include breakdowns by county. You should also note that for Quarter 2 2020, the CSO provided the following caveat:

“The number of deaths registered in Quarter 2 2020 that were assigned an Underlying Cause of Death of intentional self-harm was 25, this is less than a quarter (24.0%) of the number assigned the same Underlying Cause of Death code of intentional self-harm in the same quarter of 2019. All unnatural deaths, which includes deaths from intentional self-harm must be referred to the Coroner's Office. However, the Coroner's Court did not hold public hearings as a consequence of the restrictions imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and this would impact on the number of deaths registered and subsequently assigned an Underlying Cause of Death of intentional self-harm.”

You are always welcome to view our briefing document on annual CSO data which is always available and kept up-to-date here: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/connecting-for-life/publications/nosp-briefing-on-suicide-figures.html>.

This document includes three-year rolling average rates of suicide, by county. Using such averages is advisable when making comparisons between counties in Ireland.

I trust this information is useful for you. Please do revert should you require anything further.

Yours sincerely,



Mr John Meehan

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