

# After 65,000 excess deaths, UK figures return to normal

June 30 2020

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Britain recorded 65,000 more deaths than usual in the past three months as the coronavirus ravaged the country but numbers are now returning to normal, new data showed Tuesday.

In the week to June 19, so-called excess deaths in England and Wales fell below the five-year average for the first time since mid-March, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said.

There were 0.7 percent fewer deaths overall than would be expected for that period.

Excess deaths give a broader picture of the pandemic than the health ministry figures published every day, which only include confirmed cases of coronavirus and which currently put the toll at 43,730.

The ONS data includes people who may have had coronavirus but where it was not picked up, or who died as a result of measures introduced to tackle the disease, such as the cancellation of routine hospital operations.

Separate ONS figures show the number of deaths where coronavirus was on the [death certificate](#) but not necessarily confirmed by a test—a figure of almost 54,000 by June 19.

By any measure, Britain has suffered the deadliest coronavirus outbreak in Europe.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson is currently easing a nationwide lockdown imposed at the end of March, as Britain faces a deep recession.

But on Monday he had to close schools and shops in the city of Leicester because of a spike in cases there.

The apparent return of excess deaths to the normal level has been welcomed but experts warned that [coronavirus](#) had not gone away.

David Spiegelhalter, chairman of the Winton Centre for Risk and Evidence Communication at the University of Cambridge, noted that

783 deaths involving COVID-19 were still registered in the week to June 19.

"The lack of excess deaths is explained by non-COVID deaths being eight percent below the five-year average," he said.

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