

Italy suffered highest deaths since WWII in 2020: stats

March 26 2021



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Italy suffered its highest number of deaths since World War II last year due to the coronavirus pandemic, with over 100,000 deaths more than average, according to new figures Friday.

"The demographic picture of our country has undergone a profound change because of the impact of COVID-19 deaths," national statistic agency Istat said in a new report.

"In 2020, total deaths reached 746,146, the highest number ever recorded since World War II, with an increase on the 2015-2019 average of more than 100,000 (+ 15.6 percent)."

Daily updated health ministry data on the number of people with COVID-19 who have died since the pandemic put the toll at 74,000 by December 31, 2020.

Istat did not account for the discrepancy between the two figures.

The total number of COVID-19-related deaths has now reached more than 100,000 as Italy—the first European country to face the full force of the pandemic 13 months ago—faces a fresh wave of infections.

The Istat figures show Italy's [northern regions](#), which were hit first and hardest, have suffered the biggest increases in so-called excess deaths.

Alongside these grim figures came a record low in the number of births—at 404,104, down 3.8 percent from 2019—accelerating a trend towards a [declining population](#).

The resident population of Italy fell by around 384,000 in 2020 compared to the previous year, "as if a big city like Florence had disappeared", wrote Istat.

As of December 31, 2020, Italy's population was 59,257,566, down 0.6 percent over 12 months.

"The new record low number of births (404,000) and the high [number](#) of

deaths (746,000), never experienced since the Second World War, accelerate the negative natural dynamic that characterises our country," Istat said.

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Citation: Italy suffered highest deaths since WWII in 2020: stats (2021, March 26) retrieved 4 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-03-italy-highest-deaths-wwii-stats.html>

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