

WAID 2021 Summary for Water Safety Wales

Overall water-related fatalities

In 2021, there were 49 water-related fatalities in Wales. This is generally consistent with previous years when compared to the years 2019 and 2020 (see figure 1).

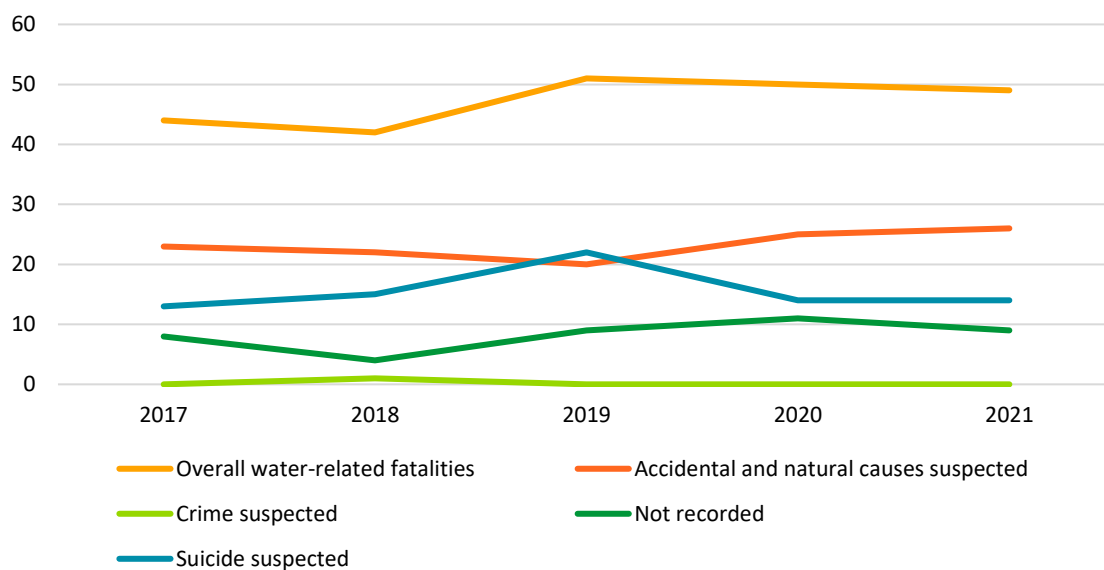


Figure 1: Overall water-related fatalities by year, 2017-2021

[Wales' Drowning Prevention Strategy](#) (WDPS) uses a three-year average (years 2016 – 2018) establishing that there are 45 water-related fatalities each year in Wales. **The 2021 figures show that overall water-related fatalities are slightly above baseline level (see Figure 2).**

Year	Overall water-related fatalities
WDPS Baseline (2016-2018 average)	45
2017	44
2018	42
2019	51
2020	50
2021	49

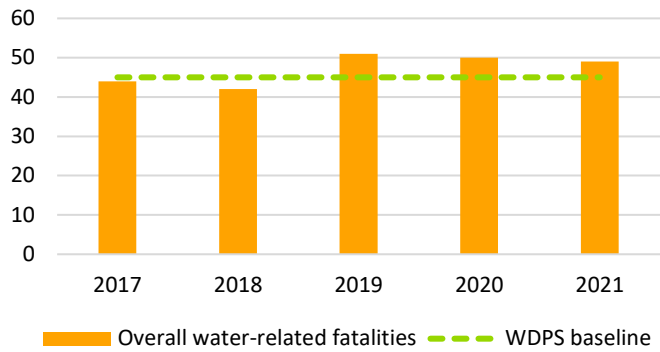


Figure 2: Overall water-related fatalities by year 2017-2021 vs WDPS baseline, Wales

Suicide suspected fatalities

In 2021, there were 14 suicide suspected fatalities at or near water in Wales. This is a decrease from previous years but still around the average of the WDPS three-year baseline.

Year	Suicide suspected fatalities
WDPS Baseline (2016-2018 average)	13
2017	13
2018	15
2019	22
2020	14
2021	14

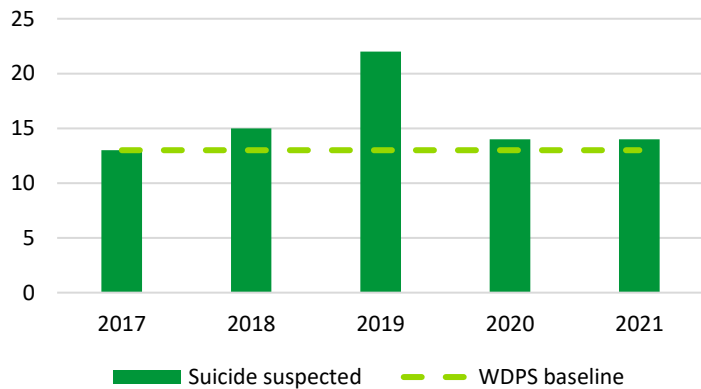


Figure 3: Suicide suspected fatalities by year 2017-2021 vs WDPS baseline, Wales

Accidental fatalities

In 2021, there were 26 accidental fatalities¹ in Wales. **This is an 8 per cent increase when compared to the WDPS baseline.**

Year	Accidental fatalities
WDPS Baseline (2016-2018 average)	24
2017	23
2018	22
2019	20
2020	25
2021	26

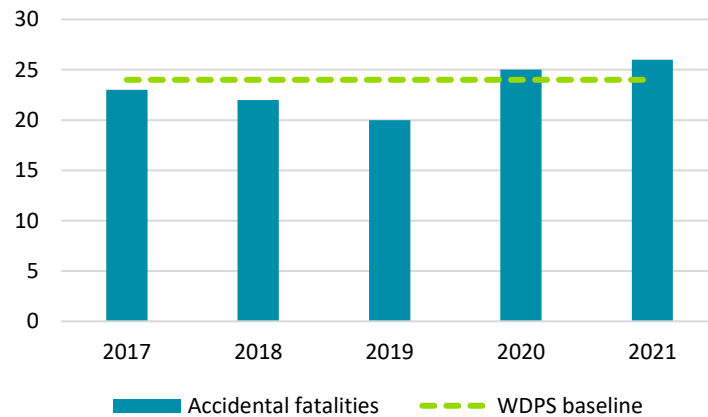


Figure 4: Accidental fatalities by year 2017-2021 vs WDPS baseline, Wales

Key points:

In 2021:

- There were 26 accidental fatalities
- 69% of accidental fatalities were male
- Males 20 - 39 were the highest group for accidental fatalities (see Figure 5)
- 62% of accidental fatalities happened at **coastal waters** (see Figure 6)
- Recreational activities accounted for 58% of accidental fatalities (see Figure 7)
- 5 accidental fatality reports noted the presence of drugs or alcohol
- The rate of accidental drowning has started to go up (0.82 per 100,000 in 2021) compared to 0.74 in 2017 (see Figure 8)
- When considering rates, males aged 20-29 were the highest group (see Figure 9)

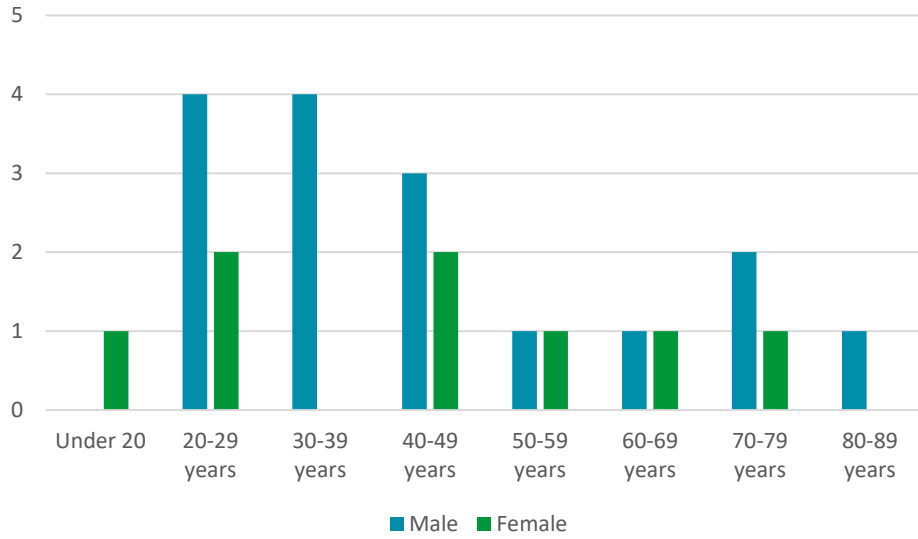


Figure 5: Accidental fatalities by age, N=24, 2 not recorded

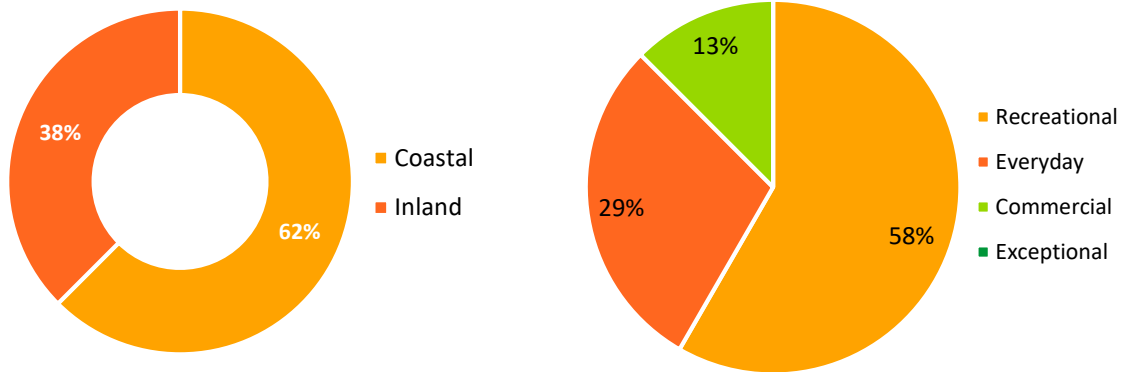


Figure 6: Accidental fatalities by location. N=24, 2 excluded

Figure 7: Accidental fatalities by activity. N=24, 2 excluded

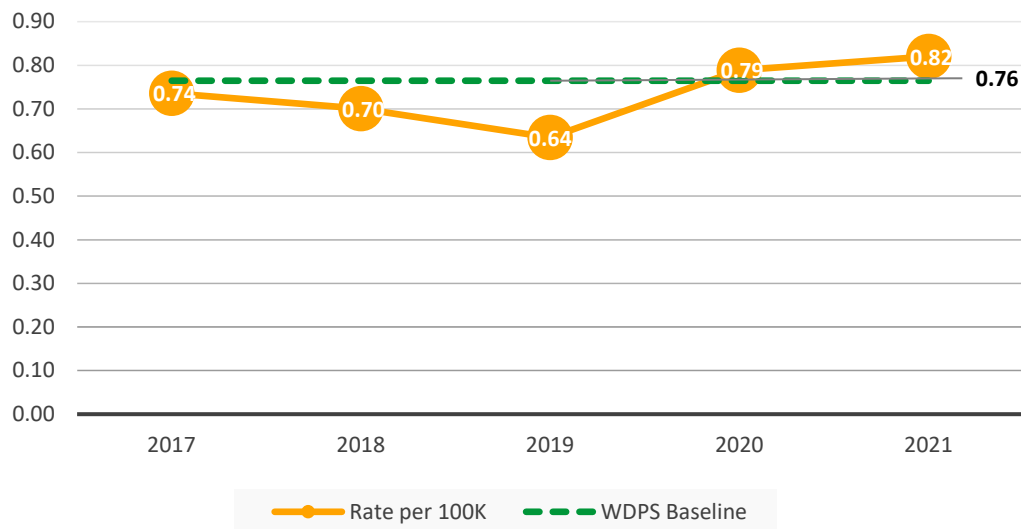


Figure 8: Accidental fatalities by year and rate 2017-2021 and WDPs baseline per 100,000 (Population Source: ONS)

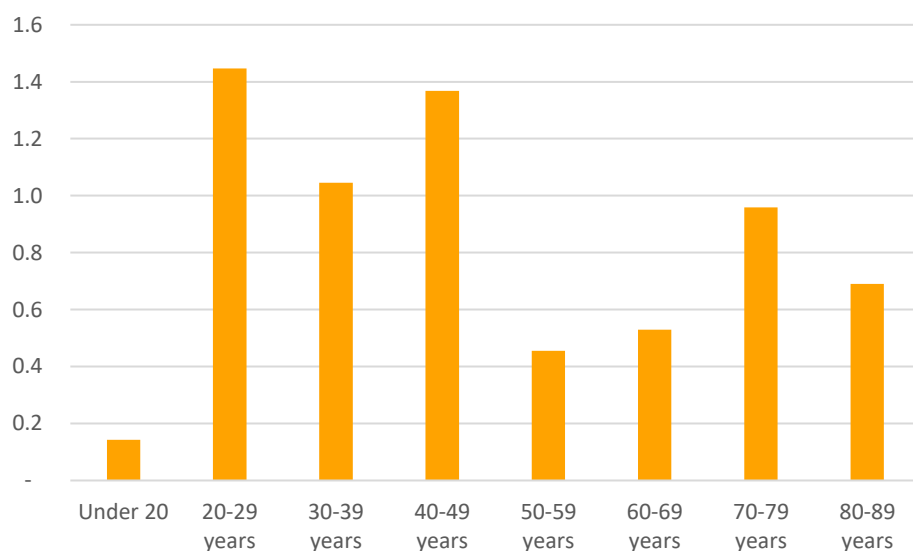


Figure 9: Accidental fatalities by age and rate per 100,000 (Population Source: ONS)

Notes:

"Accidental fatalities" refers to accidental cause and natural water related causes. This data analysis is based on the official releases of WAID data as found online <https://nationalwatersafety.org.uk/waid/annual-reports-and-data> . It should be noted that the core data providers continue to improve verification and completeness of records starting in 2012 which results in an improved record set.

All rates for population figures are based on ONS figures for the previous mid-year, published online: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwalesscotlandandnorthernireland> . Baseline rates are based on mid-year 2015 data.