

## Healthy Life Expectancy in Scotland

Update of trends to 2014

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### About this Release

This is the annual update of the Scotland-level estimates of healthy life expectancy on the Scottish Public Health Observatory website. The topic is presented in the web pages and downloadable charts and tables.

The publication includes previously unpublished data on life expectancy and healthy life expectancy for 2014 at Scotland; NHS Board, and local authority level geographical areas; and also by deprivation and urban rural classifications. It also includes estimates based on self-assessed health from the 2011 census.

### Key Points

- The most recent annual estimates for Scotland are that boys born in 2014 are expected to live 77.4 years on average, 60.3 of these in a 'healthy' state. Girls born in 2014 would be expected to live 81.4 years on average, 62.6 of these years being 'healthy'.
- Underlying trends both in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy at birth for males and females show a general improvement in Scotland over time. Male and female life expectancy at birth increased from 68.7 and 75.1 years in 1980, to 77.4 and 81.4 years in 2014, respectively; and healthy life expectancy at birth increased from 62.6 and 68.1 years in 1980, to 65.9 and 70.8 years in 2008\*, respectively.
- Time trends show that the gap between the sexes has narrowed over time. For life expectancy at birth, the difference between males and females has reduced from 6.4 years in 1980, to 4.0 years in 2014. For healthy life expectancy at birth, the difference between males and females was 3.3 years in 1980, reduced to 2.3 years in 2014.

\*Note: see 'background' section for change in methodology from 2009 onwards.

## Background

**Life expectancy** is an estimate of how many years a person might be expected to live, whereas **healthy life expectancy** is an estimate of how many years they might live in a 'healthy' state. HLE is a key summary measure of a population's health.

Healthy life expectancy at birth is a theoretical measure of the number of years that a newborn baby would live in a 'healthy' state if they experienced the death rates and levels of general health of the local population at the time of their birth, throughout their life. It is unlikely to be a true prediction of Healthy life expectancy for any individual, since death rates may increase or decrease during a person's lifetime, and people may move to areas with different mortality risks and views of their own health.

Life expectancy and Healthy life expectancy estimates should be interpreted as providing a general indication of these measures over time, rather than precise and robust figures. The results include 95% confidence intervals to give some indication of the stability of the estimates.

Note: There is a major discontinuity in the healthy life expectancy series between 2008 and 2009 due to a change in methodology to align with the European Union. This results in estimates of healthy life expectancy at birth from 2009 onwards being over eight years lower for each sex. The 2009 estimates form the start of a new time trend. See [technical report](#) for full details.

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## Further Information

The [Healthy life expectancy in Scotland](#) pages and [technical paper](#) (including Metadata and Pre-release access information) can be found on the ScotPHO website.

### ISD and Official Statistics

Information Services Division (ISD) is the principal and authoritative source of statistics on health and care services in Scotland. ISD is designated by legislation as a producer of 'Official Statistics'. Our official statistics publications are produced to a high professional standard and comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Further information [about our statistics](#).

### About ScotPHO

The Scottish Public Health Observatory (ScotPHO) collaboration is led by ISD Scotland and NHS Health Scotland, and includes the Glasgow Centre for Population Health, National Records of Scotland and Health Protection Scotland. Our aim is to make public health information more accessible and usable to improve health and reduce inequalities in Scotland.