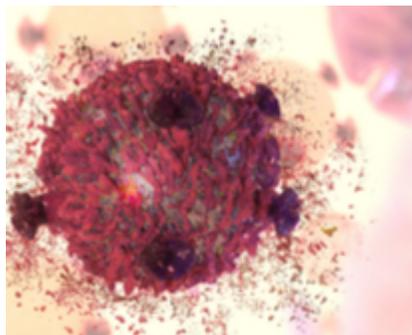


# World Cancer Day: 1 in 4 deaths caused by cancer



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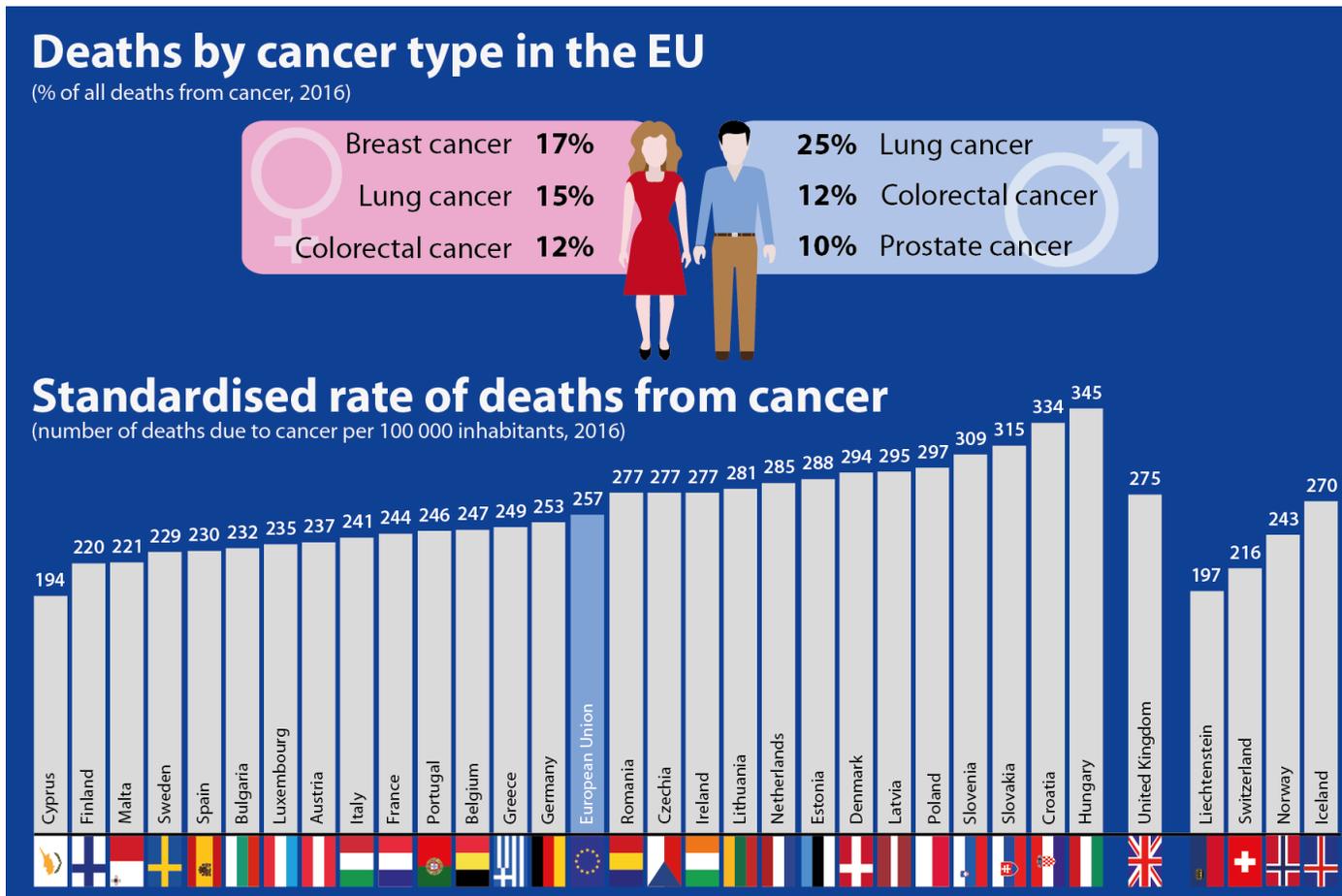
Almost 1.2 million persons died from cancer in the European Union in 2016. Cancer was responsible for over one quarter (26%) of all deaths recorded in the EU.

Men (656 100 deaths due to cancer) were more affected than women (511 600). Cancer caused 29% of deaths of men and around 23% of deaths of women in 2016. Fatal cancers caused 288 900 deaths among people younger than 65 years in the EU, corresponding to 37% of all deaths in this age group, while less than one quarter (878 800 deaths, 23%) of all deaths among those aged 65 and above.

## **Main fatal cancers: lung cancer for men, breast cancer for women**

Lung cancer claimed 239 000 lives in the EU in 2016, accounting for one fifth (20%) of all deaths due to cancer. Colorectal cancer (139 700 deaths, 12% of all deaths due to cancer), breast cancer (85 300, 7%), pancreatic cancers (78 700, 7%) and prostate cancer (65 200, 6%) were also frequent causes of death.

Lung cancer was the main fatal cancer form for men, being responsible for one quarter (165 000 deaths, 25%) of all male deaths from cancer. This was far more than colorectal cancer (77 400, 12%) and prostate cancer (65 200, 10%). Breast cancer (84 300 deaths, 16% of all female deaths due to cancer), lung cancer (74 100, 14%) and colorectal cancer (62 300, 12%) caused the most cancer deaths among women in the EU in 2016.



[ec.europa.eu/eurostat](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat)

Data source: hlth\_cd\_asdr2 (rate) and hlth\_cd\_aro (numbers)

### Death rate from cancer highest in Hungary, lowest in Cyprus

Across the European Union, there were 257 deaths from cancer per 100 000 inhabitants in 2016. With 345 deaths per 100 000 inhabitants, Hungary recorded the highest age-standardised death rate from cancer among the EU Member States. High death rates from cancer were also registered in Croatia (334), Slovakia (315) and Slovenia (309).

In contrast, low death rates from cancer were recorded in a number of Mediterranean and Nordic countries. The lowest rate was recorded in Cyprus with 194 deaths from cancer per 100 000 inhabitants, followed by Finland (220), Malta (221), Sweden (229) and Spain (230).

Over the period from 2011 to 2016, the age-standardised death rate has fallen slowly but steadily, from 266 deaths from cancer per 100 000 inhabitants in 2011 to 257 in 2016.

This news item is published on the occasion of World Cancer Day (4 February). The World Cancer Day aims to save millions of preventable deaths each year by raising awareness and education about cancer.

**For more information:**

Causes of death statistics are based on information derived from the medical certificate of cause of death. Causes of death are classified by the 86 causes of the "European shortlist", which is based on the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD).

Causes of death statistics present *absolute numbers*, *crude death rates* and *(age-) standardised death rates*. As most causes of death vary significantly with people's age and sex, the use of standardised death rates improves comparability over time and between countries.

For more information on the statistics available in this area, take a look at the overview of health statistics and the Statistics Explained article Health statistics introduced.

**Note:** The European Union (EU) includes 27 EU Member States. The United Kingdom left the European Union on 31 January 2020. Further information is published here.

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