

Changing life expectancy in Europe 1990-2019: causes and risk factors from the Global Burden of Disease Study 2019

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- Improvements in life expectancy have slowed in Europe
- In 16 European Economic Area countries plus the 4 United Kingdom nations from 1990-2013 and 2013-2019, we assessed the contribution of different causes of death to:
 - changes in life expectancy
 - exposure to major risk factors

- Countries experienced reductions in life expectancy improvements after 2013
- These were underpinned by changes in cardiovascular disease and neoplasms
- Deaths from cardiovascular disease and neoplasm were largely attributable to major risks:
 - high systolic blood pressure, dietary risks, tobacco, high LDL cholesterol, high fasting plasma glucose, high body mass index, occupational risks, alcohol and low physical activity
- Exposure to major risks worsened after 2013, particularly high body mass index and high fasting plasma glucose
- These results suggest that any improvements in medical treatment for example for raised lipids and blood pressure were negated by increasing risk factors such as body mass index and high plasma glucose
- Policy responses should include reducing population exposure to major risks, including from harmful diets and low physical activity

Annual mean change in life expectancy at birth: both sexes from by broad cause group

