Health at a Glance 2021: OECD Indicators
Highlights for the United States

Health at a Glance provides the latest comparable data and trends on the performance of health systems in OECD countries and key emerging economies. Alongside indicator-by-indicator analysis, this edition offers a special chapter on the health impact of COVID-19.

Life expectancy fell by 1.6 years in the United States in 2020; COVID-19 vaccinations have plateaued despite a strong start

As of November 1, more than **46 million COVID-19 infections** and nearly **750 000 deaths** from the virus had been recorded.

All-cause mortality in 2020 and the first six months of 2021 rose by 19.9% compared with the 2015-2019 average.

The United States recorded the **largest drop in life expectancy** of any OECD country during the pandemic, falling from 78.9 in 2019 to 77.3 in 2020 – a **decline of 1.6 years**, compared to 0.6 years on average.

In the United States, **nearly four-fifths of COVID-19 deaths** through April 2021 occurred among people aged 65+.

Just 57% of the United States population has been fully vaccinated against COVID-19, compared to 65% across the OECD on average (as of November 1).

The United States had the sixth-highest vaccination rate across 37 OECD countries on July 1, but had **fallen to ninth-lowest** as of November 1.
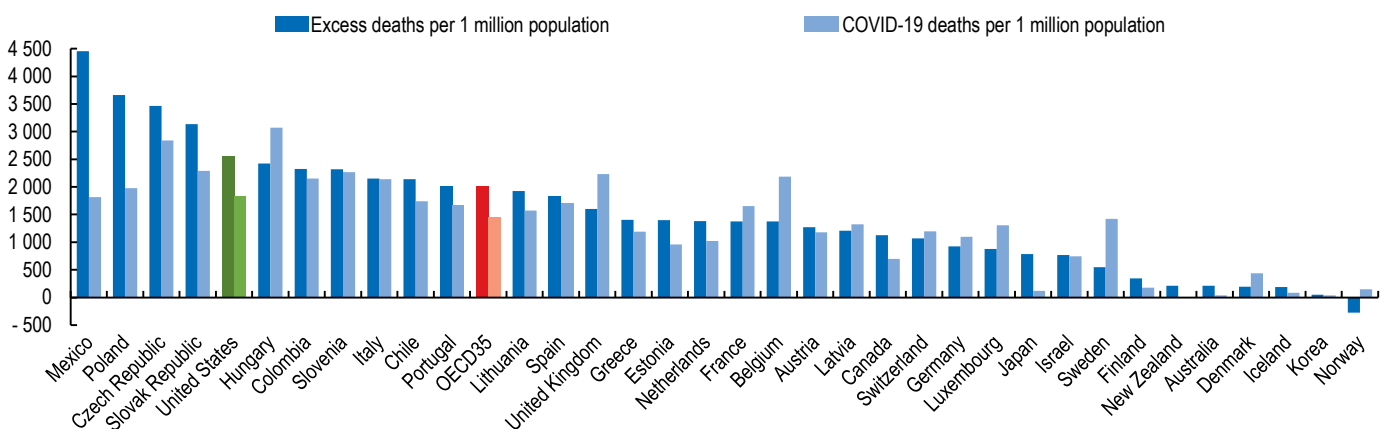
The hospitalisation rate in September 2021 was one-third of the January peak among people 85 and older, but remained at the same level among those 50 and under, a population much less vaccinated.

The COVID-19 crisis has had a significant and negative impact on population mental health. The prevalence of depression **more than tripled** to 25% in early 2021, compared with 2019.

Cumulative excess mortality compared to reported COVID-19 deaths per million population, January 2020 to end June 2021

Legend: ■ Excess deaths per 1 million population ■ COVID-19 deaths per 1 million population

Countries (x-axis): Mexico, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, United States, Hungary, Colombia, Slovenia, Italy, Chile, Portugal, OECD35, Lithuania, Spain, United Kingdom, Greece, Estonia, Netherlands, France, Belgium, Austria, Latvia, Canada, Switzerland, Germany, Luxembourg, Japan, Israel, Sweden, Finland, New Zealand, Australia, Denmark, Iceland, Korea, Norway

Health at a Glance 2021: How does the United States compare?

Legend: United States · OECD · Highest performer · Lowest performer

Health status in the United States is lower than the OECD average, though self-rated health is high

Life expectancy (2019 or nearest year)
Years of life at birth
Scale 70–90: 75.1 · **78.9** (US) · 81.0 (OECD) · 84.4

Avoidable mortality (2019 or nearest year)
Deaths per 100 000 population (age-standardised)
Scale 0–500: 97 · 199 (OECD) · **265** (US) · 405

Population ageing (2019 or nearest year)
% of population 65 and older
Scale 0–30: 7.4 · **16.5** (US) · 17.3 (OECD) · 28.4

Self-rated health (2019 or nearest year)
Population in poor health (% population 15+)
Scale 0–: 1.3 · **3.3** (US) · 8.5 (OECD) · 15.4

Smoking rates are relatively low in the United States, and overweight/obesity is the third-highest across OECD countries

Smoking (2019 or nearest year)
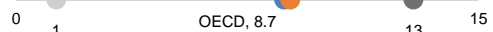Daily smokers (% population 15+)
Scale 0–30: 4 · 11 (US) · **17** (OECD) · 28

Alcohol (2019 or nearest year)
Litres consumed per capita (population 15+)
Scale 0–15: 1 · OECD, 8.7 · **United States, 8.9** · 13

Overweight / obese (2019 or nearest year)
Population with BMI>=25 (% population 15+)
Scale 0–100: 27 · 56 (OECD) · **73** (US) · 75

Air pollution (2019 or nearest year)
Deaths due to ambient particulate matter pollution (per 100 000 population)
Scale 0–100: 5 · **15** (US) · 29 (OECD) · 73

Population eligibility for core services is below the OECD average, though satisfaction is high

Population coverage, eligibility (2019 or nearest year)
Population eligible for core services (% population)
Scale 75–100: 81 · 90 (US) · 98 (OECD) · 100

Financial protection (2019 or nearest year)
Expenditure covered by compulsory prepayment (% total expenditure)
Scale 0–100: 49 · 74 (OECD) · **83** (US) · 86

Population coverage, satisfaction (2019 or nearest year)
Population satisfied with availability of quality health care (% population)
Scale 25–100: 26 · 71 (OECD) · **83** (US) · 93

The United States performs relatively well on some major indicators of health care quality, though avoidable COPD admissions are higher than the OECD average

Effective primary care (2019 or nearest year)
Avoidable COPD admissions (per 100 000 people, age-sex standardised)
Scale 0–400: 39 · 171 (OECD) · **194** (US) · 336

Effective preventive care (2019 or nearest year)
Mammography screening within the past two years (% of women 50+)
Scale 0–100: 31 · 62 (OECD) · **77** (US) · 95

Effective secondary care (2019 or nearest year)
30-day mortality following AMI (per 100 000 people, age-sex standardised)
Scale 0–30: 2 · **5** (US) · 7 (OECD) · 28

The United States spends more on health as a percentage of GDP than any other OECD country

Health spending (2019 or nearest year)
% of GDP
4.3 · 8.8 (OECD) · **16.8** (US)

Hospital beds (2019 or nearest year)
Per 1 000 population
Scale 0–16: 1.0 · **2.8** (US) · 4.4 (OECD) · 12.8

Doctors (2019 or nearest year)
Practicing physicians (per 1 000 population)
Scale 0–20: 2.0 · **2.6** (US) · 3.6 (OECD) · 6.16

Nurses (2019 or nearest year)
Practicing nurses (per 1 000 population)
Scale 0–20: 1.4 · 8.8 (OECD) · **12.0** (US) · 18.0