



DLRG Statistics 2021: At least 299 people drowned in Germany

Bad Nenndorf. In the past year at least 299 people drowned in Germany. That are 79 less deaths than during the previous year, as the German Lifesaving Association (DLRG) announced in Hanover in March. "In 2021 we had the lowest level since the year 2000, when we started systematically compiling drowning numbers", says the President of the DLRG, Ute Vogt, and adds restrictively: "The victims of last year's terrible flood disaster are not included in these statistics." Many of the 180 people who died in the states of Rhineland-Palatinate and North Rhine-Westphalia mid-July probably drowned, but the DLRG could not quantify this exactly.

Excluding this rare event, about 20 percent less people drowned last year than in 2020. Overall, the number of drowning victims fell for the third year in a row. The DLRG President says: "That was quite surprising for us, as we expected more accidents due to the pandemic. But apparently most people behaved prudently at and in the waters, to which hopefully the tireless educational work of the DLRG contributed."

255 of the compiled fatal incidents – about 85 percent – occurred in inland waters in 2021. Most of the victims, i.e. 131, were to be mourned in lakes and ponds (2020: 175). 95 people (130) lost their lives in rivers, 13 (16) in streams and ditches and 16 (14) in canals. Vogt: "The greatest risk of drowning still exists in lakes and rivers. Only a few stretches waters are being watched by lifesavers – and if at all, only to a limited extend."

The number of unfortunate incidents has slightly increased in pools (from six to seven) and in the sea (from 21 to 26), but these waters still are relatively safe. While there is mainly full-time personnel accounting for people's safety in public swimming pools, there are thousands of volunteers at the coast from the beginning of May to the end of September. About 5.000 volunteer lifesavers work at more than 80 stations of the DLRG from Borkum to Usedom. Fatal accidents usually happen off the guarded beaches or outside the working hours of the lifesavers.

Fatalities due to the heat

A look at the summer months shows the context between weather conditions and drowning accidents. Almost two of three victims (63%) were registered from June to September. The 189 drowning victims in the relative cool and wet summer represent a decrease of 69 fatalities in this period. But there was one significant increase: During the month with the only enduring heat period of the year at least 76 people died in the water, 30 more than in June 2020. "This shows how the end result could have been with more heat periods ", the President of the DLRG explained.

The comparison by age groups strikingly shows that 57 percent of the victims with a known age were older than 50 years. "So people in the second half of their lives are represented above average in the statistics. Careless behaviour and overestimation of their own capabilities are not only found among young people. Among senior citizens, their often-unknown pre-existing illnesses also play an important role."

Worries about the next generation

There are relatively few kids among the victims. 17 boys and girls between zero and ten years drowned, six less than the year before. There was a slight increase of fatal incidents in the age group of the eleven- to twenty-year-old's, from 26 to 30. "The misfortunes of young people are particularly

tragic. In this context we note with great concern that fewer and fewer children can swim safely today", says Ute Vogt.

Men drown more frequently

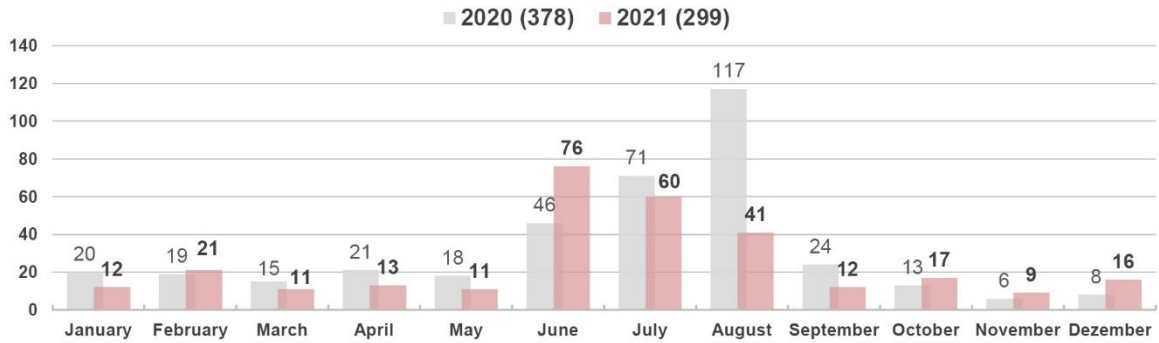
In 2021 most people drowned in the state of Bavaria. However, 60 victims means about a quarter less than the previous year. The significant declines in Rhineland-Palatinate (-62,5%), North Rhine-Westphalia (-48,9%) and Lower Saxony (-48%) are remarkable. More fatal incidents than in 2020 occurred mainly in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania (from 21 to 30) and Sachsen-Anhalt (from four to twelve).

As in the past, there is a clear difference between the sexes: 241 male versus 58 female victims. As in previous years, four out of five drowned people were male.

About DLRG

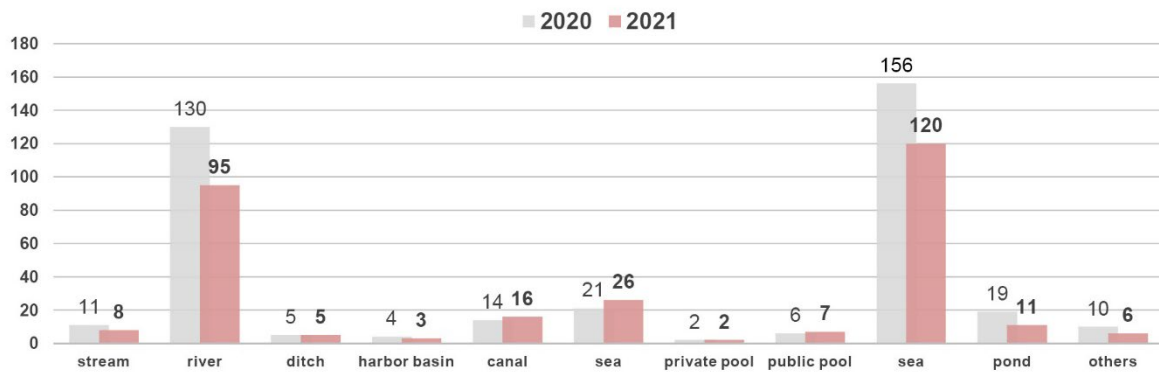
With over 1.8 million members and sponsors the DLRG is the largest lifesaving organization in the world. Since its founding in the year 1913 the organization is committed to preserve people from drowning. Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier is the Patron. With 23 million swimming exams and more than five million lifesaving exams passed from 1950 to 2020 the DLRG also is the largest private provider in swimming education and the number one in lifesaving education in Germany. Its members work around 6.8 million hours on a voluntary basis in nearly 2.000 local branches. Another central key task of the DLRG the is elucidation about the dangers of waters as well as water rescue service. About 45.000 members watch for the safety of bathing guests and water sports enthusiasts for about two million hours every year.

Deaths by Months



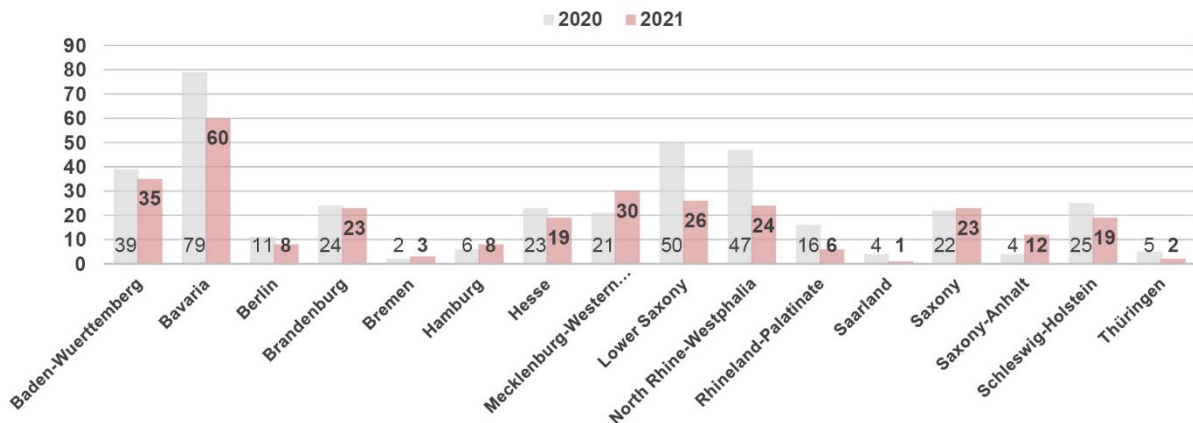
Source: DLRG e.V.

Deaths by Waters



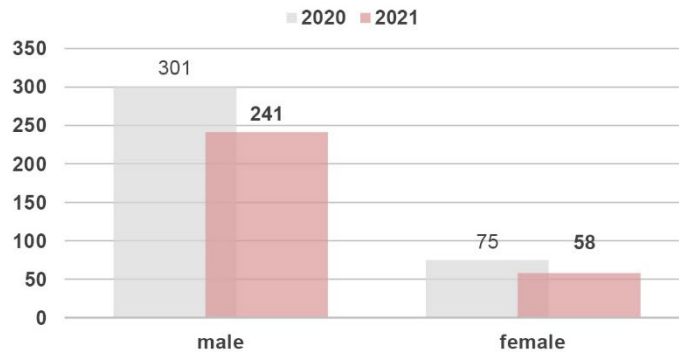
Source: DLRG e.V.

Deaths by States



Source: DLRG e.V.

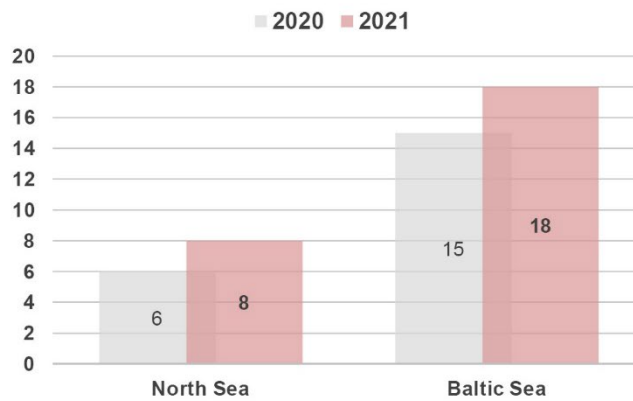
Deaths by Sexes



2020: plus 2 people with unknown gender (0,5%)

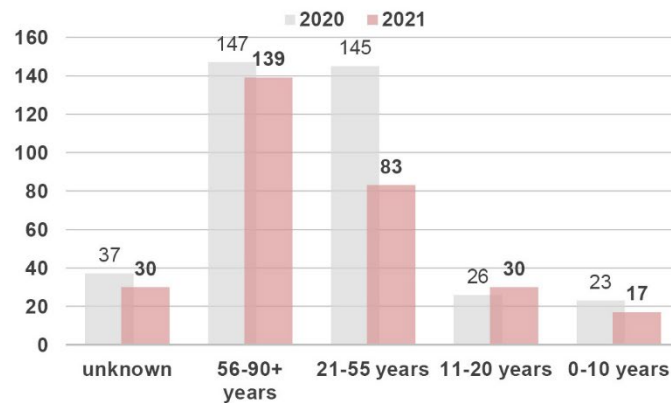
Source: DLRG e.V.

Deaths in the North and Baltic Sea



Source: DLRG e.V.

Deaths by Age Groups



Source: DLRG e.V.