

# *WHO reports at least 15,000 killed by hot weather in Europe in 2022*

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**A child plays in a fountain in the warm weather in London, Friday, June 17, 2022 as a blanket of hot air stretching from the Mediterranean to the North Sea is giving much of Western Europe its first heat wave of the summer. (AP photo)**

Geneva, November 8 (RHC)-- At least 15,000 people have died in Europe because of hot weather in 2022 so far, the World Health Organization said Monday, with Spain and Germany among the worst-affected countries. The three months from June-August were the hottest in Europe since records began,

and the exceptionally high temperatures led to the worst drought the continent has witnessed since the Middle Ages.

"Based on country data submitted so far, it is estimated that at least 15,000 people died specifically due to the heat in 2022," the WHO's Regional Director for Europe Hans Kluge said in a statement. "Nearly 4,000 deaths in Spain, more than 1,000 in Portugal, more than 3,200 in the United Kingdom, and around 4,500 deaths in Germany were reported by health authorities during the 3 months of summer," he added.

"This estimate is expected to increase as more countries report on excess deaths due to heat," it said, highlighting the UN climate summit in Egypt and its calls for rapid action. Crops withered in European breadbaskets, as the historic dry spell drove record wildfire intensity and placed severe pressure on the continent's power grid.

Successive heatwaves between June and July, which saw temperatures top 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit) in Britain for the first time, saw some 24,000 excess deaths in Europe.

Spain, France and other western European nations on Saturday sweltered under a blistering June heatwave that has sparked forest fires and concerns that such early summer blasts of hot weather will now become the norm.

"Heat stress, when the body cannot cool itself, is the leading cause of weather-related death in the European Region," the WHO said.

It added that extreme temperatures can be a danger to people who suffer from chronic heart disease, breathing problems and diabetes. The World Health Organization said increasing heatwaves and other extreme weather will "lead to more diseases and deaths" in the next decades unless "drastic" action is taken.

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