

Contents:

- Location (the country, region and (primary) town from which the data was retrieved)
- Year (*we used the following dates to assign a year to each case (in order of preference): date of death, date found, date of autopsy, date of inquiry, date of registration*)
- Case number (*we have assigned individual numbers to each case that refer to the country, the registry where the data was collected, and the number of the case*)
- Procedural information, including: the date and place of registration, the date of inquiry/investigation into the death and the official body responsible for that inquiry/investigation, the date and institute of the forensic medical examination, whether the person was identified or not, known details about the identification, date of burial/burial authorization/repatriation of the body and final place of burial
- Information about the person, including: the label used to describe the (usually unidentified) cadaver in official documents, sex, age (*as stated or calculated from date of birth*), estimated age (*usually based on the medical examination*), stated country of nationality, country of birth, country of last residence, presumed ethnicity/race (*as described in the documents*), personal items found with the body, and noted features of the person
- Information about the death, including: date and place of death (*as recorded in the documents; this may refer to the place the death was officially declared such as the port, or it may refer to the jurisdiction or to a specific place where the body was found*), date and place the body was found (*as recorded in the documents*), circumstances in which the body was found, and how long the person was estimated to be dead before the body was found/examined
- Information about the incident, including: the place and assigned number of the incident (*a shipwreck or crossing involving more than one death, that we found*), and details of the incident (*as recorded in the documents*)
- Cause of death, including: primary cause of death, secondary cause of death, and other information regarding the cause of death or condition of the body
- Source(s) used in completing the data for that person (*death certificates were the primary source of data for the Database*), but in some places these were not available or not sufficient and so other archives were searched such as coroners archives and cemetery registers)
- Certainty rating (*each case is classified as either 1-confirmed, 2-likely, or 3-possible, according to specific criteria*)