

Changes in place of death among elderly in Sweden

Elizabeth Åhsberg
City of Malmö

Britt Marie Hellner
The National Board of Health and Welfare

Thoughts about dying...

- When?
 - not to early
- How?
 - without suffering
- Where?
 - relief available against pain, anxiety etc.

Societal changes in the 1990'ies

- Medical development
- Strengthened position of the patient
- National Reform 1992
 - aim to offer social and medical care at home
 - fewer beds in hospitals
 - transfer of responsibility

Aim

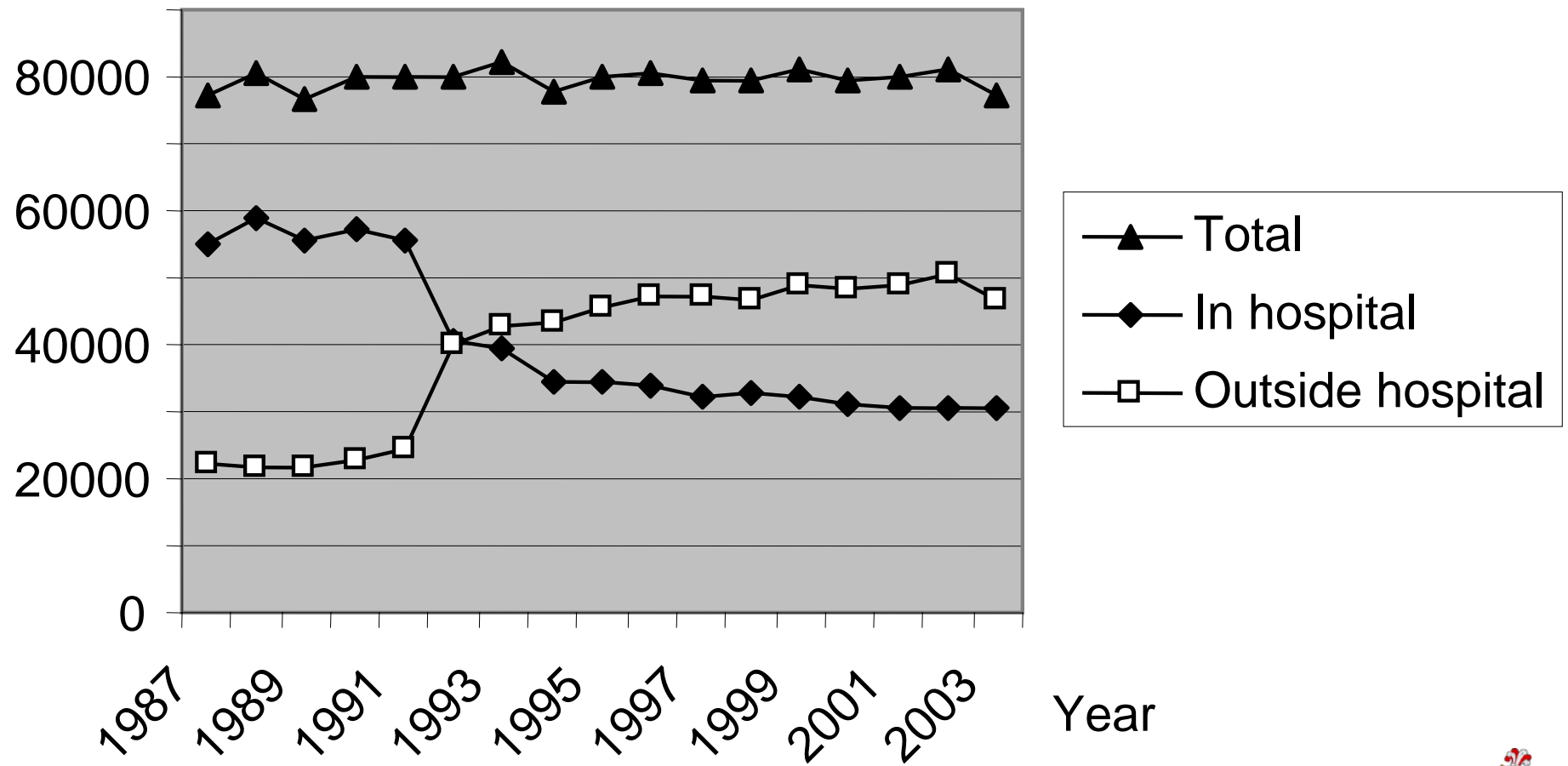
- The National Board of Health and Welfare
 - commission to follow health care
- Explore place of death
 - for persons older than 65 years
 - during 1997-2003

Method

- National register data on
 - place of death (inside / outside hospital)
 - discharge from hospital <2 weeks before death
 - age
 - gender
- Sample of medical journals
 - place of death (nursing homes)
 - age
 - gender

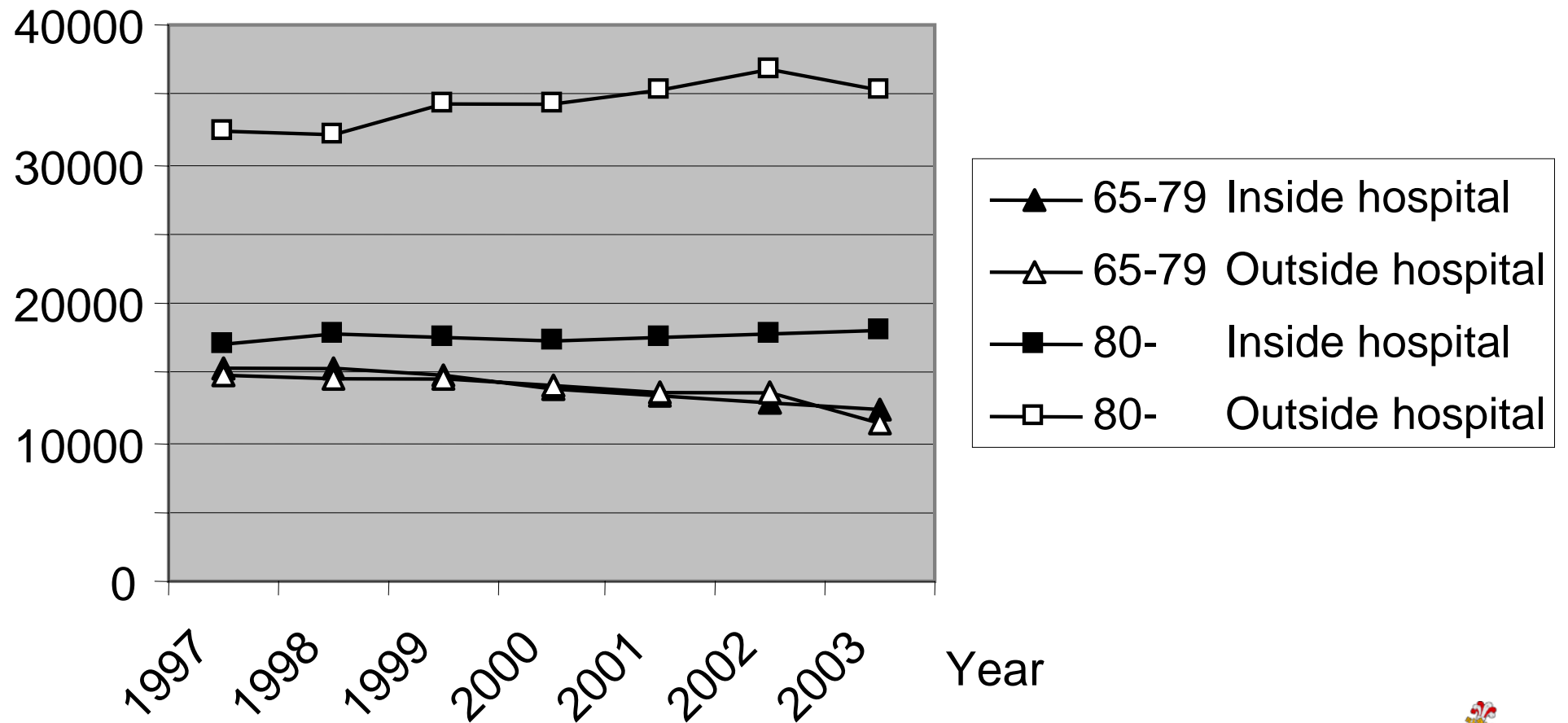
National data on place of deaths among elderly, ≥ 65 years

Number of deaths

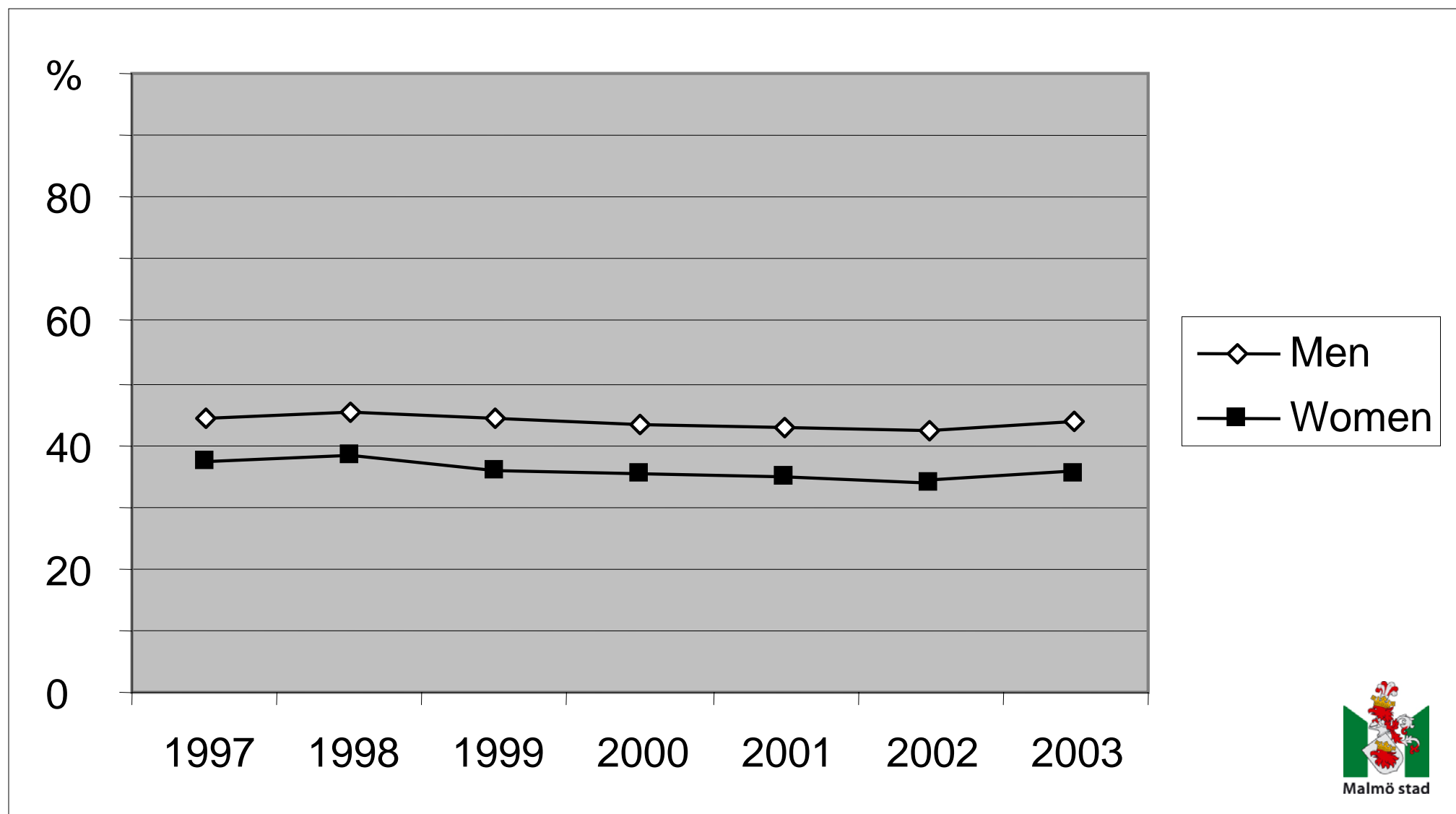


Place of death per age group

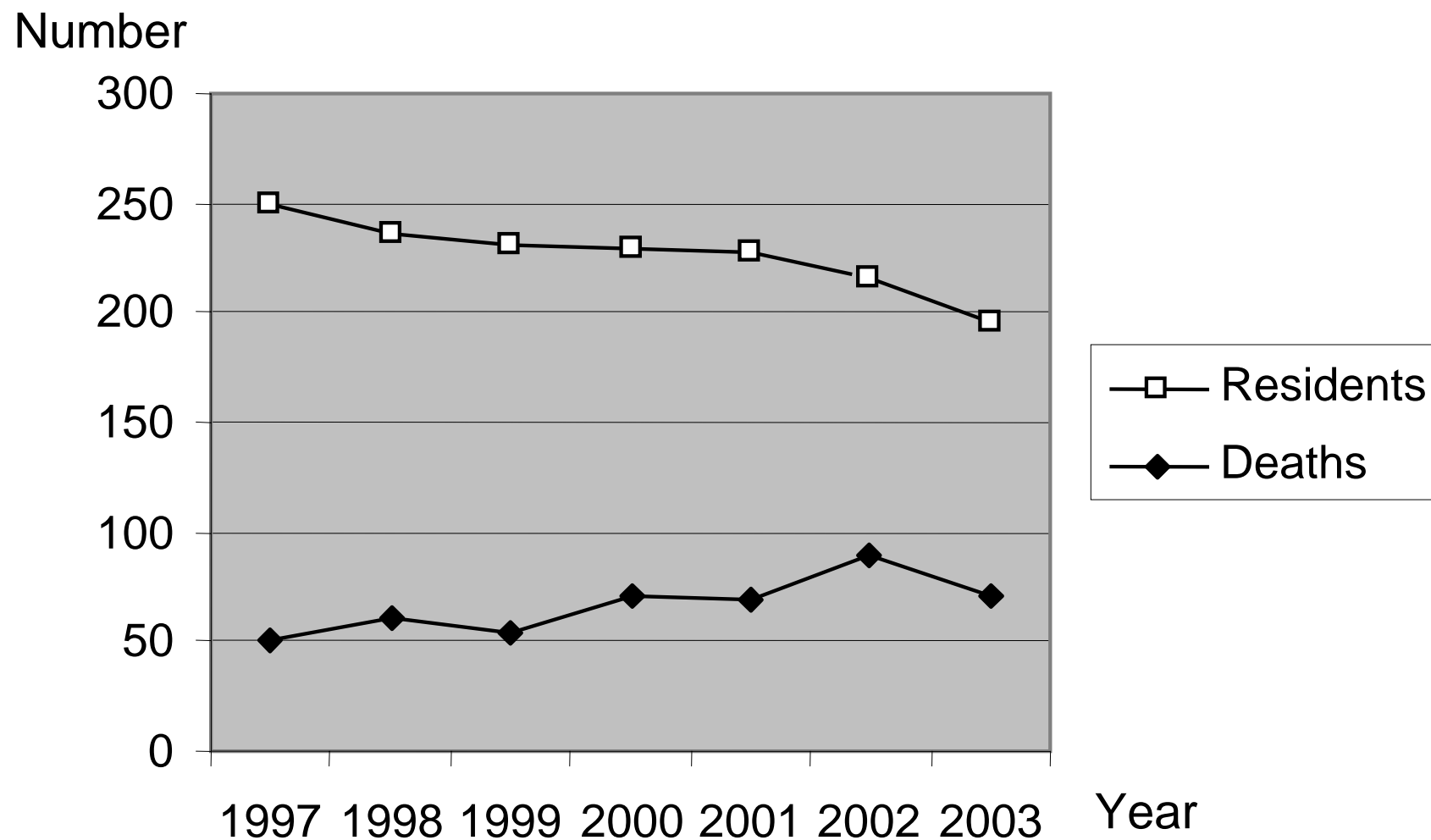
Number of deaths



Percent of deaths in hospitals per gender, ≥ 65 years

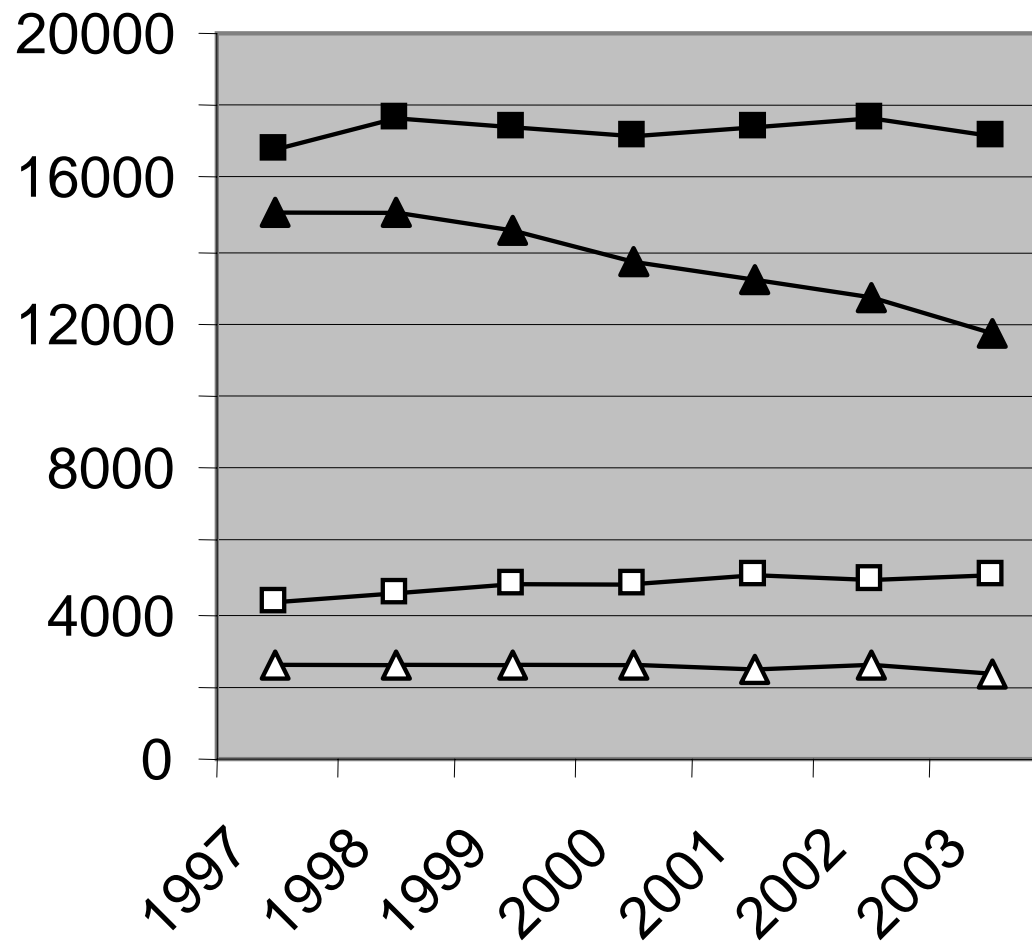


Number of residents and deaths in four nursing homes



Place of death for patients discharged from hospital <2 weeks before death, per age group

Number of deaths



In total: 36 000 to 40 000 persons per year, i.e. about half of all deaths

- ▲— 65-79 Inside hospital
- △— 65-79 Outside hospital
- 80- Inside hospital
- 80- Outside hospital

Conclusion

- Place of death
 - following social reform: shift from hospital to community
 - age: persons older than 80 years mostly die outside hospitals
 - gender: no clear difference
- Transfers in last stage of life, for about half of the deceased older persons
- Residents in nursing homes: more frail

**The study was financed by The Swedish
National Board of Health and Welfare**

