

# Statistical Situation of Mental Disorders of Elderly in Romania

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## Abstract

The Romanian Ministry of Public Health considers that the mental health of romanian population constitutes a public health problem (<http://www.gencat.cat/salut/imhpa/>). World Health Organization Statistics show that the average evolution of mental disorders will increase in the next period of time in Romani and in other countries of the European Union. The article is an analysis of the statistical situation of mental disorders in elderly in Romania, as an item of "Amélioration des réseaux professionnelles pour les personnes âgées", Arpa-ageing European project.

Key-words: mental health problems, elderly population, Romania, statistical situation, ARPA ageing-project.

The Romanian Ministry of Public Health considered that mental health of romanian population constitutes a public health problem (<http://www.gencat.cat/salut/imhpa/>). In the actual social and economic context, the public policies of health constitute the priority issue of: prevention, legislative measures, education, infrastructure, human and financial resources, in the field of mental health (<http://www.gencat.cat/salut/imhpa/>).

"Studies on demographic prognosis estimate that in the next 20 years, the percentage of elderly persons will double" and 3% of the old people will suffer from this mental disorder that represents "up to 60% of all dementia" (\*\*\*RJNP, 1990).

Elderly Mental Health situation published in the book: *International Perspectives on Mental Health* shows the following conclusions:

- It is needed to change the direction of mental health service delivery of elderly, from hospital to community care, and support;
- The human resource for mental health care is insufficient by number, and inadequately trained;
- Stigma in mental health is an obstacle in ensuring the access to health and care services for people with mental disorders (Gavrilă-Ardelean, 2016);
- Preventive education is needed in the field of mental health;
- It is needed to improve the Psychiatry training, through research programs and projects (Gavrilă-Ardelean, 2008; Fond-Harmant et al., 2016);
- To deliver mental health services at community level, it is important to make a clear delimitation between treatment and health care;
- The quality of life for old people with mental diseases will be improved through the development of psychiatric networks at community level (Tătaru, 2011, p.379 in Hamid Ghodse ed.).

World Health Organization goals in mental health, for Romania, (2010–2011) were:

- "Capacity building of primary care staff in mental health care;
- Support development of guidance for recognition and treatment of autism and spectrum disorders;
- Capacity building of specialist mental health staff working in community settings" (WHO/<http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/noncommunicable-diseases/mental-health/country-work>).

In the last years, Romania took part of a few European Projects in the Mental Health field, with other countries (Luxembourg, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Greece). These projects aim to develop good practices and skills of mental care professionals, and better

networks in mental health (Fond-Harmant & Gavrilă-Ardelean, 2016; Fond-Harmant & al., 2016).

ARPA-ageing is the acronym of the European project "Amélioration des réseaux professionnelles pour les personnes âgées" ("Improving the Network of Mental Health Professionals for the Elderly"), and its objective is to improve the professional mental health network for specialists and beneficiaries in the geriatrics field. This analysis is part of the Arpa –ageing project and was partially presented at the Social Work Days event of the "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad workshop on 07 April 2018 and partially on ISREIE 2019.

World Health Organization Statistics show, for Romania, and for other countries, members of the European Union, the average evolution of mental disorders in the period of time 2009-2014 (Table 1).

A study published in 2010, about the quality of life in Romania, shows the situation of subjective indicators of life quality assessment, from mental health perspective in our country, and in other European countries (Table 2, Figure 1), (Pop, 2010).

In Romania, in 1965, there were 460,000 psychiatric patients. From these, 82% (381.000 patients) had organic brain syndromes of elderly, neuroses, alcoholism, personality and behavioral disorders; and 18% (79,000 patients) suffered from severe depressive syndrome, psychoses, dementia, and the other and mental diseases. "The epidemiologic studies made were insufficient, lacking in many respects the standards of a reliable statistical outlook" (Donna, 1993).

Table 1. Mental disorders (average) in Europe 2009-2014

|                                | Mental and behavioural disorders |      | Dementia and Alzheimer's disease |       | Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of alcohol |      | Mental and behavioural disorders due to psychoactive substance use |      | Schizophrenia, schizotypal and delusional disorders |      | Mood [affective] disorders |      | Other mental and behavioural disorders |      |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|------|----------------------------------|-------|--|------|--|------|---|------|----------------------------|------|--|------|
|                                | 2009                             | 2014 | 2009                             | 2014  | 2009   | 2014 | 2009   | 2014 | 2009  | 2014 | 2009                       | 2014 | 2009                                   | 2014 |
| Belgium (*) <sup>(2)</sup>     | 10.4                             | 10.1 | 43.1                             | 41.8  | 7.8  | 7.5  | 8.5  | 8.6  | 12.6  | 11.9 | 12.8                       | 13.2 | 8.7                                    | 8.4  |
| Bulgaria                       | 29.3                             | 24.4 | 37.7                             | 24.7  | 27.7   | 23.5 | 13.9   | 16.5 | 38.7  | 31.4 | 22.6                       | 19.8 | 20.9                                   | 18.3 |
| Czech Republic                 | 51.3                             | 40.0 | 172.8                            | 126.0 | 35.5   | 31.2 | 29.0   | 30.1 | 113.9   | 70.2 | 39.5                       | 37.8 | 38.5                                   | 33.4 |
| Denmark                        | 20.5                             | 17.9 | 27.9                             | 19.5  | 3.7  | 3    | 11.5   | 10.8 | 34.7  | 28.7 | 26.8                       | 25.3 | 17.9                                   | 15.1 |
| Germany                        | 24.3                             | 24.4 | 33.1                             | 30.1  | 13.5   | 12.8 | 14.4   | 15.5 | 34.4  | 32.8 | 35.1                       | 34.9 | 23.9                                   | 23.5 |
| Estonia                        | 16.2                             | 17.5 | .                                | .     | .  | .    | .  | .    | .   | .    | .                          | .    | .                                      | .    |
| Ireland (*)                    | 10.7                             | 9.9  | 91.9                             | 69.0  | 4.5  | 4.7  | 10.6   | 9.9  | 35.3  | 21.2 | 14.2                       | 10.3 | 12.3                                   | 9.1  |
| Greece                         | .                                | .    | .                                | .     | .  | .    | .  | .    | .   | .    | .                          | .    | .                                      | .    |
| Spain (*)                      | 26                               | 25.7 | 119.5                            | 93    | 12.4   | 12.3 | 11.2   | 11.7 | 33.1  | 30.5 | 18.7                       | 18   | 24.8                                   | 29.1 |
| France (*)                     | 5.7                              | 5.7  | 24.6                             | 22.8  | 3.1  | 3.2  | 4.1  | 4.4  | 3.9   | 4.4  | 5.8                        | 5.8  | 6.7                                    | 7.0  |
| Croatia                        | 32.5                             | 35.9 | 67.4                             | 68.3  | 21.4   | 24.3 | 21.5   | 35.1 | 54.5  | 52.8 | 26.3                       | 29.2 | 26.4                                   | 30.7 |
| Italy                          | 14.0                             | 13.9 | 29.6                             | 29.1  | 10.4   | 11.0 | 8.7  | 9.8  | 16.3  | 15.9 | 15.6                       | 15.3 | 11.7                                   | 11.7 |
| Cyprus (*)                     | 25.4                             | 12.9 | 8.1                              | 9.9   | 13.7   | 5.2  | 3.0  | 8.1  | 39.7  | 17.1 | 12.5                       | 16.1 | 8.5                                    | 10.3 |
| Latvia                         | 21.4                             | 22.7 | 61.0                             | 71.5  | 4.7  | 7.3  | 17.8   | 10.3 | 40.5  | 32.9 | 29.6                       | 25.7 | 23.3                                   | 22.1 |
| Lithuania                      | 23.7                             | 20.8 | 49.4                             | 52.6  | 8.2  | 7.9  | 7.9  | 5.8  | 35.8  | 36.0 | 27.0                       | 23.1 | 18.9                                   | 16.6 |
| Luxembourg                     | 25.8                             | 26.6 | 41.5                             | 45.0  | 22.7   | 24.0 | 33.3   | 34.6 | 42.7  | 46.2 | 18.6                       | 21.2 | 26.0                                   | 22.8 |
| Hungary                        | 26.3                             | 29.0 | 78.3                             | 88.4  | 30.7   | 32.1 | 42.0   | 35.9 | 38.0  | 39.1 | 21.4                       | 23.9 | 15.6                                   | 17.5 |
| Malta (*)                      | 27.0                             | 44.5 | 38.9                             | 95.8  | 22.6   | 9.4  | 28.8   | 24.5 | 34.7  | 52.5 | 26.7                       | 45.8 | 23.8                                   | 55.0 |
| Netherlands (*) <sup>(5)</sup> | 19.3                             | 17.6 | 35.6                             | 29.7  | 6.2  | 5.1  | 7.4  | 7.5  | 28.6  | 27.8 | 30.9                       | 28.1 | 18.1                                   | 16.0 |
| Austria                        | 19.5                             | 22.9 | 33.7                             | 64.2  | 17.3   | 16.7 | 21.9   | 23.9 | 31.2  | 35.2 | 18.0                       | 20.6 | 17.6                                   | 20.3 |
| Poland                         | 35.7                             | 29.3 | 58.4                             | 42.7  | 21.0   | 19.8 | 25.6   | 20.7 | 61.4  | 43.2 | 42.3                       | 39.1 | 33.7                                   | 28.7 |
| Portugal                       | 16.7                             | 16.7 | 32.8                             | 36.7  | 12.2   | 13.2 | 11.5   | 13.8 | 21.2  | 20.9 | 18.5                       | 17.5 | 12.5                                   | 13.1 |
| Romania                        | 17.5                             | 18.2 | 36.2                             | 41.8  | 11.8   | 9.7  | 11.5   | 8.9  | 30.3  | 28.1 | 14.6                       | 12.6 | 15.1                                   | 18.4 |
| Slovenia                       | 36.5                             | 36.0 | 67.9                             | 47.7  | 29.1   | 30.2 | 28.7   | 30.9 | 52.4  | 54.9 | 45.3                       | 44.2 | 25.5                                   | 24.5 |
| Slovakia                       | 28.8                             | 27.1 | 40.5                             | 36.0  | 28.0   | 26.5 | 26.7   | 28.7 | 36.4  | 34.6 | 29.5                       | 26.7 | 25.2                                   | 23.6 |
| Finland                        | 43.6                             | 35.9 | 222.3                            | 165.0 | 8.2  | 6.9  | 15.2   | 12.2 | 57.8  | 57.8 | 26.0                       | 22.3 | 21.9                                   | 21.3 |
| Sweden                         | 18.8                             | 14.0 | 32.3                             | 24.2  | 4.1  | 3.9  | 8.2  | 5.4  | 50.5  | 33.9 | 19.7                       | 17.6 | 20.7                                   | 14.9 |
| United Kingdom                 | 46.8                             | 38.9 | 115.9                            | 95.5  | 7.7  | 6.4  | 18.4   | 14.5 | 111.0   | 98.2 | 46.0                       | 42.8 | 44.7                                   | 32.3 |
| Iceland                        | 12.6                             | 11.8 | 44.4                             | 46.5  | 7.4  | 6.6  | 6.9  | 6.7  | 16.9  | 16.2 | 13.4                       | 13.0 | 12.1                                   | 9.2  |
| Norway (*)                     | 3.4                              | 19.3 | 13.8                             | 28.8  | 1.8  | 14.2 | 1.3  | 22.4 | 2.7   | 25.1 | 3.4                        | 21.6 | 5.1                                    | 15.3 |
| Switzerland                    | 35.3                             | 28.6 | 98.4                             | 66.2  | 22.9   | 19.5 | 22.1   | 23.0 | 60.4  | 38.7 | 38.4                       | 33.4 | 29.8                                   | 24.9 |
| FYR of Macedonia (*)           | 69.4                             | .    | 72.7                             | .     | 54.7   | .    | 175.8  | .    | 115.1   | .    | 36.6                       | .    | 29.7                                   | .    |
| Serbia                         | .                                | 35.8 | .                                | 61.4  | .  | 29.0 | .  | 19.9 | .   | 49.7 | .                          | 35.2 | .                                      | 27.0 |
| Turkey (*)                     | 16.6                             | 15.0 | 16.0                             | 13.2  | 13.4   | 15.6 | 7.8  | 8.3  | 27.3  | 27.0 | 14.7                       | 13.0 | 9.5                                    | 8.1  |

(\*) 2013.

(<sup>2</sup>) Excluding psychiatric hospitals or mental health care institutions.

(<sup>3</sup>) Psychiatric hospitals are not included except if they are forming a hospital complex.

(<sup>4</sup>) 'Alzheimer's disease': 2010 instead of 2009.

(<sup>5</sup>) 2012.

(<sup>6</sup>) Break in series.

(<sup>7</sup>) 2007 data instead of 2009.

(<sup>8</sup>) 2011 instead of 2014.

After WHO: File:In-patient average length of stay for mental and behavioural disorders and Alzheimer's disease, 2009 and 2014(days).png

(<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/images/c/cb/>)

Table 2. Mental health index in European Union (averages), 1993-2006

| <b>Country</b> | <b>Mental health index<br/>(average)</b> |
|----------------|--|
| Austria        | 59,9                                     |
| Belgium        | 66,1                                     |
| Bulgaria       | 56,5                                     |
| Cyprus         | 57,7                                     |
| Czech Republic | 61,7                                     |
| Denmark        | 67                                       |
| Estonia        | 58                                       |
| Finland        | 65                                       |
| France         | 62,3                                     |
| Germany        | 67,1                                     |
| United Kingdom | 60,5                                     |
| Greece         | 60                                       |
| Hungary        | 63,4                                     |
| Ireland        | 67,1                                     |
| Italy          | 58,5                                     |
| Latvia         | 55,2                                     |
| Lithuania      | 57,7                                     |
| Luxembourg     | 63,4                                     |
| Malta          | 53                                       |
| Netherlands    | 67,2                                     |
| Poland         | 59,2                                     |
| Romania        | 53,8                                     |
| Slovakia       | 60,2                                     |

|          |      |
|----------|------|
| Slovenia | 60,5 |
| Spain    | 65,8 |
| Sweden   | 66,6 |
| Portugal | 59,9 |
| UE 15    | 63,3 |
| NMS 12   | 58,4 |
| UE 27    | 62,3 |

Source: EQLS 2007, 1993-2006 (Pop, 2010, XXI, 3-4: 303)

"Romania ranks second in Europe in terms of the incidence of mental illness, to 1403.75 cases per 100,000 inhabitants, after Estonia, which reported 2057.27 cases per 100,000 population in 2011 to the European Health for All Databases, according to a press release press on depression. Every year approximately 300,000 new cases reported, which puts us all in second place in Europe.

Psychiatric pathology in our country spans a wide range, from mild anxiety depressive disorders sphere (9 of 10 people WHO statistics), panic attacks, alcohol and substance addiction, the psychoses, endogenous disease, or emotional coloratura schizophrenia (WHO).

In Romania, the number of patients discharged with mental and behavioral disorders was 278,000 in 2012 compared to 222,000 in 2005 (an increase of about 25% in the number of patients). In 2011 there were 17,067 reported psychiatric beds and neuropsychiatry in our country and the incidence of mental disorders was 1330.58 inhabitants in ‰ (second in Europe), whereas the incidence of alcoholic psychosis was at 20.18 ‰ inhabitants (WHO).

Number of psychiatrists per 100,000 population varies widely: from 30 ‰ to 26 ‰ in Switzerland and Finland to 3 ‰ to 1 ‰ in Albania to Turkey. Psychiatrists rate in the 41 countries is 9 ‰ population (WHO).

Nursing staff in mental health care rate in Finland is between 163 to 4 ‰ population in Bosnia and Herzegovina and 3 ‰ in Greece (WHO)" (Gavrilă-Ardelean, 2015, p. 154-155).

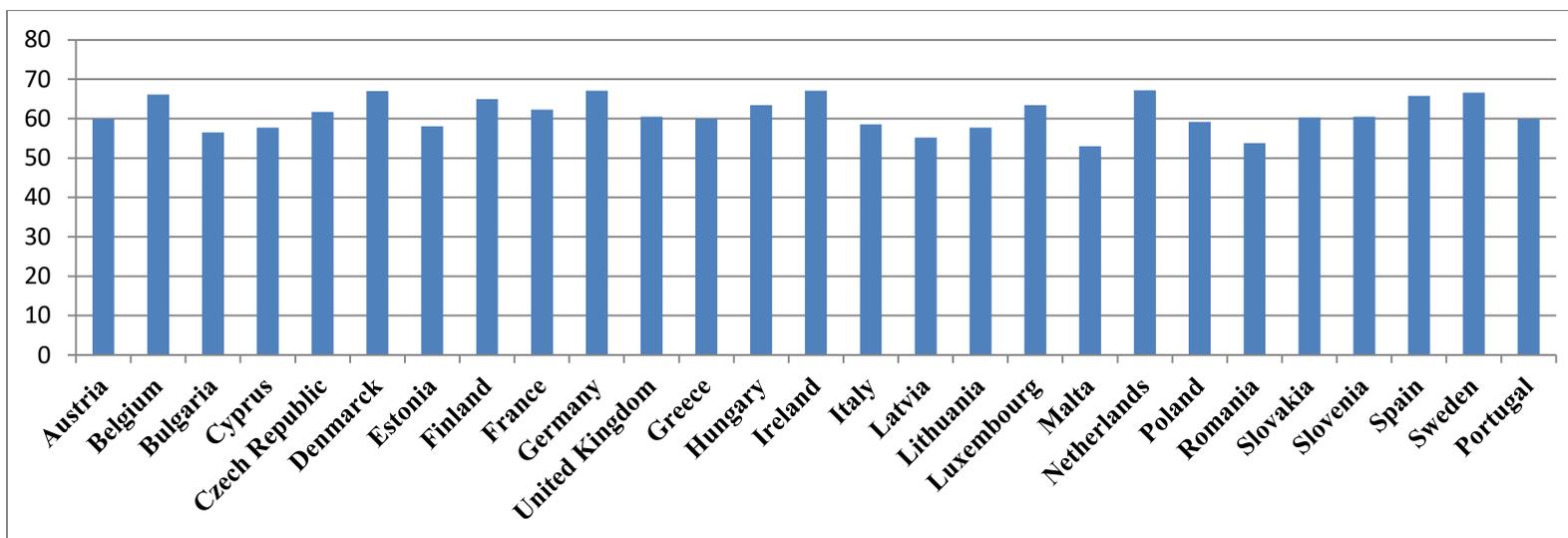


Figure 1. Mental health index in the European Union (averages)

Table 3. The number of patients with mental diseases who left public hospitals in period 1993-2006 (%o patients)

| Year                                    | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| <b>Mental and behavioural disorders</b> | 215  | 236  | 233  | 234  | 246  | 246  | 238  | 273  | 287  | 271  | 265  | 222  | 259  | 253  |
| <b>Nervous System diseases</b>          | 185  | 201  | 194  | 203  | 207  | 214  | 215  | 248  | 264  | 252  | 253  | 217  | 249  | 238  |
| <b>Cerebrovascular diseases</b>         | 62   | 58   | 64   | 63   | 68   | 71   | 74   | 91   | 96   | 100  | 116  | 113  | 144  | 125  |
| <b>Tumors</b>                           | 183  | 194  | 201  | 215  | 225  | 237  | 245  | 316  | 343  | 321  | 327  | 276  | 323  | 325  |

Sours: Tempo, INS, 2009, (Pop, 2010, XXI, 3-4: 305)

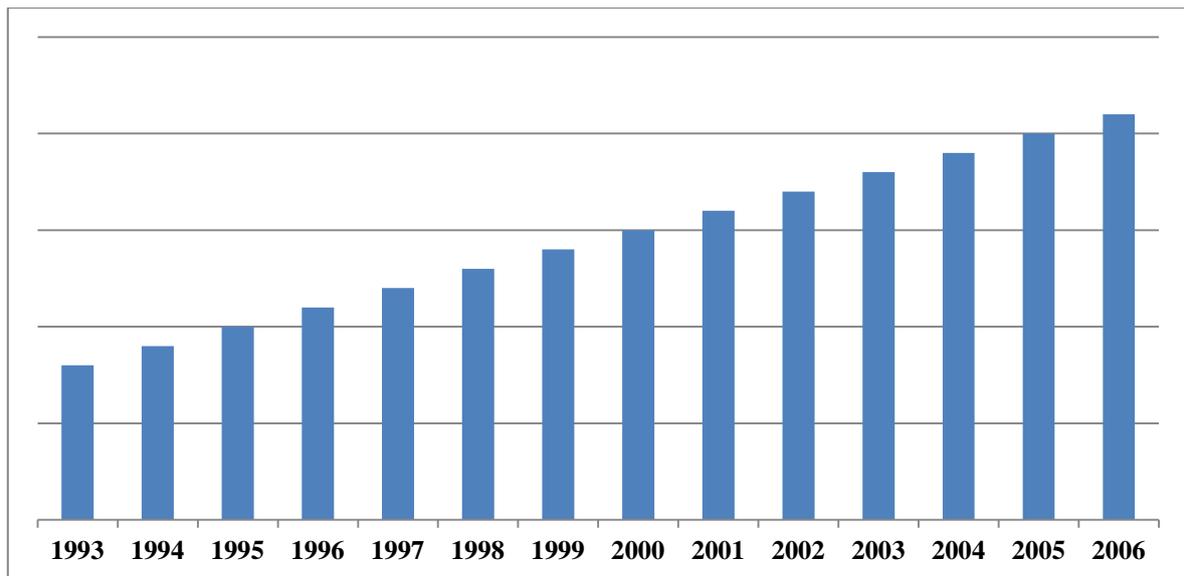


Figure 2. Evolution of mental disorders (% patients), in Romania in period 1993-2006

The objectives of the long-term programme of World Health Organization (WHO), in the area of elderly mental health, as shown elsewhere, were:

- to reduce the prevalence of mental disorders in communities;
- to strengthen a good behaviour and the needs of elderly, while improving their self-esteem;
- to develop and implement services in pilot areas, for example, including only two countries located in Central and Eastern Europe (**Romania** and Yugoslavia), (Kaprio, 1991).

The actual mental health goals of the European Union are to empower the persons with mental diseases, and help them become able to self-manage their own lives.

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