

Annual Report on the National Health System of Spain 2015

International comparisons

English traslation

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Introduction

The document entitled INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS contains the most significant elements of the chapter of the 2015 Annual Report of the National Health System of Spain that is dedicated to comparisons among countries of the European Union (EU). This document is intended to facilitate the use of the original Report and to contribute to greater dissemination of its contents.

Generally speaking, the sources of the data appearing in the Report are the health databases of the European Union (EU), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the figures are in most cases those published prior to October of 2015. In selecting which information would be included, priority was given to data having the same definition, in order to ensure comparability among territories.

The data about Spain reflects the data collection calendars of the various bodies and it may precede the data used in other parts of the Report, but preference was given to presenting the data as it appears in the international statistics when they were accessed.

For some indicators the EU figure is estimated by calculating the arithmetic mean of the data of the countries, provided the population coverage is over 70%.

We would like to express our gratitude to the members of the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality work teams in charge of statistics and information systems for their collaboration in the creation of the 2015 Annual Report on the National Health System of Spain.

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE NATIONAL HEALTH SYSTEM OF SPAIN 2015

International comparisons

DEMOGRAPHICS AND HEALTH STATUS

Population and basic demographic indicators

- The European Union 28 (EU-28) has a population of 508.2 million inhabitants. Spain, with 46.4 million, accounts for 9.1% of the residents of Europe and it is one of the six countries, along with Germany (16.0%), France (13.1%), United Kingdom (12.7%), Italy (12.0%) and Poland (7.5%), which together are home to over 70% of the EU population.
- The crude birth rate in the EU-28 is 10.4 births per 1,000 inhabitants and the mean maternal age is 30.2 years. In Spain the number of births is slightly higher than 9 per 1,000 inhabitants, and the mean maternal age, close to 32 years, is the highest of EU countries. In the 28 countries of the EU, for each 100 persons of working age there are 27.5 who are over 64 years of age. Spain occupies an intermediate position within the EU, with numbers (27.2%) close to the European average.
- The Life Expectancy at birth (LE_b) of residents of the EU-28 is 80.3 years. Spain, with a LE_b of 83.1 years, has the highest in the EU and its Life Expectancy at age 65 (LE₆₅) is 21.4, the second highest, after France, where it is 21.6 years. The LE₆₅ in the EU overall is 19.6 years.

Mortality

- As regards the age-adjusted death rate, Spain is one of the four EU countries with the lowest rate of death from ischaemic heart disease (41.9 compared to 77.9 per 100,000 inhabitants) and from cerebrovascular disease (31.4 compared to 49.9 per 100,000 inhabitants) and it shows a rate of death from lung cancer (33.4 per 100,000 inhabitants) that is lower than the average of the EU as a whole (36.7 per 100,000 inhabitants).
- The rate of death from breast cancer in women (17.6 per 100,000 inhabitants) is the lowest among the countries of the EU as a whole (22.7 per 100,000 inhabitants).
- The countries of southern Europe –Cyprus, Greece, Malta, Italy and Spain– and the United Kingdom are the countries with the lowest rates of death from suicide (less than 7.0 per 100,000 inhabitants compared to 10.2 of the EU).
- As regards death from traffic accidents, Spain's rate is lower than the EU average (4.3 compared to 5.7 per 100,000 inhabitants).

Perceived health status

- The European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (abbreviated as EU-SILC) indicates that most European citizens aged 16 and over have a positive view of their health (67.1%). Spain, with 71.6%, is above the European average, and the same is true in the population aged 65 and over (38.9% compared to 37.1%).
- In the European context, Spain has intermediate values for four of the chronic health problems analysed: diabetes, high blood pressure, chronic bronchitis/COPD, asthma.

Mother and child health

- In almost all the countries of the EU, infant mortality is low: of every 1,000 live births fewer than 4 children die during their first year of life. In Spain the number is less than 3 deaths per 1,000 live births. All the EU-28 countries have gradually reduced their infant mortality rates.
- Out of every 100 babies born in the EU, 7 weigh less than 2,500 grams. In general countries located in the north of Europe have a lower percentage of low birth weight infants (under 5%) while in countries in the south and the east the percentage is higher (over 8%). The figure in Spain (7.7%) is higher than the EU average and shows an upward trend.
- In the EU as a whole, there are 216.4 elective terminations of pregnancy for each 1,000 live births. Spain has a rate of 255.3 elective terminations of pregnancy for each 1,000 live births, and thus has values similar to those of France or the United Kingdom.

LIFESTYLE HABITS

Tobacco use

- The EU-28 countries show great variation in the proportion of adults who smoke on a daily basis. The average percentage in EU countries is 23.0%. Spain, at 23.9%, occupies a position slightly higher than the average and, as in the other European countries, shows a downward trend. In all European countries the prevalence of smoking is higher in men than in women, with the exception of Sweden, where the numbers are very similar.

Alcohol use

- The use of alcohol in the EU-28, as determined by the monitoring of sales, is 10 litres of pure alcohol per adult aged 15 and over. Spain shows an average consumption of 9.8 litres per adult. In the last 25 years alcohol consumption levels in the EU-28 have progressively decreased. This downward trend may reflect changes in consumers' habits and also more responsible policies aimed at the control of alcohol consumption. The levels of consumption in Spain have also declined in the past 25 years, falling from 14.5 to 9.8 litres per capita.

Obesity

- The percentage of obese adults in European countries presents a wide range of values, from less than 8% (Rumania) to 25% or more (United Kingdom and Hungary). The European average is 16.7%. Spain, where 16.6% of adults are obese, is among the intermediate values of the EU. In Spain and in the rest of Europe, obesity levels have been on the rise, although this trend seems to have slowed in recent years.

CARE RESOURCES: PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT AND WORKFORCE

Hospital beds

- In the EU-28 there are 2.7 million hospital beds available, which represents a rate of 5.3 beds per 1,000 inhabitants. Spain has 3.0 beds per 1,000 inhabitants. Over the last decade the number of hospital beds available in EU countries has decreased. This can be explained by the reduced need for hospitalization, a result of technological progress and the growth of activity without admission, especially ambulatory surgery. Overall, the reduction in EU-28 territory is 9%. In the same period hospital beds in Spain have decreased 5%.
- With regard to the care function of the available beds, in the EU-28 67% of the beds are used for acute processes and 13% are for psychiatric treatment. The remaining 20% are for long-

term care and other types of care. Spain has beds in the following proportions: 77% are acute care beds, 12% are psychiatric beds and 11% are for long-term care.

Dispensing pharmacies

- There is an average of 28.5 dispensing pharmacies for every 100,000 inhabitants in EU countries. Spain, with over 46 pharmacies per 100,000 inhabitants, is one of the countries with the highest availability of this resource.

Medical and nursing professionals

- The countries of the EU-28 have a total of 1.8 million doctors working in them, which means the average density is 3.5 doctors per 1,000 inhabitants. Spain has 3.8 doctors per 1,000 inhabitants. In general terms, most European countries are showing growth in the number of practicing doctors per 1,000 inhabitants. In Spain, in the period 2000-2013, the rate of practicing doctors per 1,000 inhabitants rose 20.4%, as compared to 17.9% in the EU as a whole.
- The average number of nurses in EU countries is 8.4 per 1,000 inhabitants, which means, in absolute numbers, that there are over 4.2 million nursing professionals. Spain has 5.1 nurses per 1,000 inhabitants. In the EU significant variations are observed among countries in the rate of practicing nurses. This may be an indication of the lack of comparability of the data being used, so countries must be compared with great caution.

ACTIVITY, QUALITY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES

Care activity without hospitalisation

- In the EU, the per capita average of all types of medical consultations, with either general practitioners or specialists, is almost 7 consultations per person/per year, although there is significant variation between territories, which may be the consequence of cultural factors and of how the care services are organised. With 7.4 consultations per year, Spain is slightly above the average.
- All the countries of the EU have vaccination programmes based on their interpretation of the risks and benefits of each vaccine. The age that vaccination takes place in small children varies from country to country as a result of the different programmes. In the EU, vaccination coverage of children is 97%. Vaccination against measles in children aged 1-2 is currently 94%, with 89% also receiving the recommended boosters. In Spain there is 96% coverage when it comes to the basic series and 95% coverage when it comes to vaccination against measles.
- As for the seasonal flu vaccine, 38.5% of European adults aged 65 and over receive the vaccination, with coverage in this group declining over the past few years. The coverage in Spain is 57%.

Care activity with hospitalisation

- In the hospitals of the EU-28 nearly 89 million discharges take place each year, which means the frequentation is 175 hospital discharges (for any cause) per 1,000 population. Spain has a frequentation of 110 discharges per 1,000 population. In the countries of the EU, including Spain, the main causes of hospitalisation are circulatory diseases, pregnancies, accidents and other external causes, and also diseases of the digestive system, tumours and diseases of the respiratory system.
- The average stay (days) in the hospitals of the EU-28, regardless of the cause, is 7.5 days. Spain (7.6 days) has an average stay similar to the average of the EU-28. The average stay at the hospital is, among other measures, a good indicator of effectiveness. In the countries of the EU-28, the average stay for all causes has fallen almost 2 days since the year 2000.

Organ donation and transplants

- In the EU-28 in 2014 there were 10,073 deceased donors (rate of 19.7 per million population) and 31,890 transplants were performed on 30,946 patients (rate of 60.6 per million population). Spain, with 35.7 deceased donors per million population and 90.0 transplanted patients per million population, leads organ donation and transplant activity.
- By organ, renal transplants are the most common, with almost 20,000 transplants performed (rate of 38.5 per million population), followed at a distance by hepatic transplants, with over 7,000 transplants performed (rate of 14.5 per million population).

Perceived quality and accessibility of the health system

- According to the European Commission's Eurobarometer, 71% of the citizens of the EU-28 consider the quality of the health care they receive in their country to be *good*. In Spain the percentage of respondents that express this opinion is 77%, 6 points above the average in the EU-28.
- In the EU-28, 3.6% of citizens state that they have medical needs that go unmet because of the costs, the distance that would have to be travelled or the lack of transportation and the waiting lists. In Spain, just 0.8% of those surveyed state that they are in such a situation.

USE OF MEDICINES

- The use of generic medicines in EU-13 countries is over 40% of the total number of publicly-financed medicine packages and generics represent 22% of the total retail value of the publicly-financed medicines. In Spain, for the same year (2012), the figures are 39.7% and 18.4% respectively, and they are on the rise, as confirmed by the figures of 48.4% and 22.2% of 2014.
- The average use of antihypertensive medicines in European countries is 357.0 daily defined doses /1,000 inhabitants/day (DID). Use in Spain is much lower, 87 points less than the European average.
- Hypolipidemic agents show an average use of 97.4 DID in the EU as a whole, while in Spain the use of this type of medicine is 4 points lower. Both at the European and the Spanish level use is on the rise.
- The European average in the use of antidiabetic medicines (66.6 DID) and the Spanish average (66.4 DID) are very similar. In both cases rates show an upward tendency. In the case of Spain the reasons for this growth may be the increase in the prevalence of diabetes in the Spanish population, the rise in the risk factors (obesity), the ageing of the population (higher life expectancy) and a greater number of patients in advanced stages of the illness.
- Spain registers the highest use of antiulcerant medicines in the EU, with 120.7 DID. For the group of European countries as a whole the average use is 71.4 DID. Such high consumption in Spain may be due to it being utilized, especially in older, polymedicated patients, as a stomach protector, as it reduces the adverse gastric effects of many pharmaceuticals and thus helps patients achieve better compliance with other treatments prescribed.
- The European average of antidepressants is 55.6 daily defined doses /1,000 inhabitants /day (DID). As for antidepressants, Spain, with a DID of 64.0, shows a use somewhat higher than the European average. The higher use of antidepressants might have its explanation in the increased incidence of mood disorders, the better diagnostic detection by primary care doctors and the extension of the medicines' approved indications.

HEALTH EXPENDITURE

- The current expenditure on health in the countries of the EU-28 is over one trillion Euros. European countries devote, on average, 8.3% of their GNP and 2,120 Euros per inhabitant to health. Spain devotes 8.8% of its GNP and 1,950 Euros per inhabitant.
- In European countries overall public health expenditure as a share of total health expenditure is 71.8%. In Spain the share is 71.5%, which places it practically at the EU mean.

