

Mortality and causes of death among persons over 85 in the European Union

This study aims at examining the scenario of mortality and health in the European Union after the accession of the ten new Member States. Since the beginning of the 20th century, mortality has undergone a profound change: mortality among younger ages has decreased and it has increased among older ages. As a consequence of this pattern, life expectancy has increased and volume of elderly people continues growing.

However, the scenario of mortality and health in the European Union has undergone a change after the accession of the new Member States. Mortality trends are more pronounced in the group of the new Member States. In fact, life expectancy at birth varies from 77.2 to 80.5 years among the former European Union-15 countries, and varies from 71.2 to 78.6 years among the ten new Member States, which implies still higher mortality. Also there are differences by causes of death and in the new Member States diseases of the circulatory system are higher (more than 65%).

In general, population ageing has interested to politicians and social scientists by their economic and social consequences (demands of health care services and old-age benefit systems). However, old-age mortality should receive more attention in research because population ageing must be parallel to the improvements in quality of life. The scientific advances in diagnosis and treatment of diseases are crucial in the new stage that the developed societies initiate.

The main objective of the poster is to document mortality patterns and causes of death among persons aged 85 and over in the European Union, particularly in the new Member States.

In order to address these topics, we will use data from the European shortlist for Causes of Death based on the International Statistical Classification

of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD) of the World Health Organization. We will first present a description of the evolution of life expectancy in the European Union, as well as mortality levels. Then, we will focus on main causes of death among persons over 85: neoplasms, diseases of the circulatory system and diseases of the respiratory system. In a final analysis, we will examine the differences in mortality and morbidity in European countries especially in the new Member States of the European Union.