

## **Mortality and life expectancy of elderly people after World War II in Hungary**

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The paper deals with the post World War II epidemiological process in Hungary concerning mortality and life expectancy of elderly people. This process can be divided into three phases. According to Péter Józán, the first period is 1949-1966 and the second is between 1966-1993. The third period started at the beginning of 1990's and continues presently. The phases of the epidemiological process are defined on the basis of the trends of mortality and life expectancy of the population of Hungary. The first period after World War II is characterised by improving mortality and life expectancy. In the second period qualified epidemiological crisis emerged: the period is characterised by deteriorating life expectancy of 30-59 years old males. The third phase is the period of "revival" in which improving mortality and life expectancy can be seen again.

The results of the analysis of the life expectancy of elderly people qualitatively similar to the results of Peter Józán regarding the population aged 30-59 years. Life expectancy of 60 years old people increased 0.9 years between 1949-1966, decreased 0.36 years between 1966-1993 and increased again 1.67 years between 1993-2004. There are significant differences in the change of life expectancy of elderly people by gender in the studied periods. The life expectancy of 60 years old males increased 0.3 years between 1949-1966, decreased 1.67 years between 1966-1993 and increased 1.61 years between 1993-2004. The shifts of life expectancy of 60 years old females in the same periods are: 1.49, 0.58 and 1.68 respectively. The contributions of males and females respectively to the shifts of life expectancy are different by periods. The advantageous change of life expectancy of elderly people between 1949-1966 can be explained mainly by the improvement of life expectancy of old age females. The favourable shift of life expectancy of 60 years old population from 1990's is caused by the improving life expectancy of both sexes.

Data show, that elderly male life expectancy decreased significantly between 1966-1993 in the decades of epidemiological crisis similarly to the male life expectancy at birth. The life expectancy of old age population grows most intensively in the present period of

three phases of the epidemiological process. On the basis of the study of life expectancy at age 60 in the last five decade can be stated, that unprecedented improvement of life expectancy of old age population can be seen nowadays. The increasing of life expectancy can be explained by decreasing age specific mortality rates of most important main groups of diseases. From the middle of 1990's we can see contemporarily decreasing age-specific mortality rates of the diseases of the circulatory, respiratory and digestive system and of malignant neoplasms.

The improving of life expectancy of elderly people from the 1990's shows convergence to the trend of increasing life expectancy of old age population of the 15 countries of the EU before enlargement.

#### Data:

Data of CSO on age- and causes-specific mortality between 1949-2004

Life tables from 1949 to 2004

Health for all Database of WHO

#### Methodology:

Life table methods

Arriaga decomposition method