

NATIONAL REPORT – SRC 4 CLEFT - ROMANIA

GENERAL DATA

Romania is a central-european country, in the north of the Balkan peninsula, inside and outside the Carpathian arch, on the lower course of the Danube, and is bathed by the Black Sea. The total area of the country is 238397 km².

According to the National Institute of Statistics, the resident population of the country is 19414458 persons, among them 3042242 children aged between 0-14 years old (15.7%). The average age of the resident population is 42.1 years old.

The official language in Romania is Romanian language (>90%). Other languages that are commonly spoken (by the minorities) are hungarian, romani, ukrainian, german, russian, etc

The average take home salary in Romania in 2020 is around 3,000RON (about 625 euros).

In 2019 the main activities of the national economy were: Agriculture, forestry and fishing (1844 thousand persons), Industry (1895 thousand persons), Construction (715 thousand persons), Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (1271 thousand persons), transport and storage (512 thousand persons) while Human health and social work activities were counting 427 thousand persons.

In 2019, the economically active total population was 9033 thousand persons (lower than the year before) – 97 % were between 15 and 64 years old. According to the International Labor Office 353 thousands active persons were unemployed. Unemployment rate in 2019 is 3.9 %.

Education in Romania comprises different levels of education: pre-primary, primary and secondary and tertiary (universities). Enrolment rate for the school age population is 72.1%.

Percentage of enrolled population by level of education are 63% for primary and secondary education and 15% for the tertiary education. (National Institute of Statistics)

Romania has a universal health care system, which is sustained by the government (expenditures aprox 5% GDP).

The Romanian health system is organized at two main levels: the national level responsible for the implementation of government health policy; and the district level responsible for ensuring service provision according to the rules set centrally. The social health insurance system is managed by the National Health Insurance House (NHIFH). The NHIH is also represented at district level by district health insurance houses (DHIHs). In primary health care around 11000 family doctors in contract with NHIH (2000 inhabitants list). According to the data collected through the National Institute of Statistics (NIS) annual survey, in 2017 there were: 367 public and 209 private hospitals at tertiary care level in Romania.

Any Romanian citizen have the right to cost-free, unrestricted medical procedures, as prescribed by a physician, with the proof of the paid medical insurance. Romanian citizens, and also citizens of the European Union without any paid insurance shall be entitled to free emergency medical assistance.

CLEFT CARE

The treatment of cleft patients in Romania is performed both in public and private health care institutions. Generally, surgical treatment is free of charge, usually performed in public hospitals, but orthodontic treatment, speech therapy and psychological support are covered by the national insurance system only when these are available in public hospitals; orthodontic treatment is mostly performed in private services.

There are 6 cleft care centers in Romania: Bucharest (2), Brasov, Cluj, Iasi, Timisoara.

Surgical treatment of these patients in Romania is disputed by different surgical specialties: pediatric surgery, plastic surgery, oral and maxillofacial surgery and sometimes otorhinolaryngology.

Next to the surgeon, the core of the cleft team is composed by orthodontic surgeon and the speech therapist. Auxilliary, the psychologist, specialist in fetal ultrasound, geneticist, neonatologist, pediatrician are also involved in treatment of these patients.

Speech therapy is usually initiated in cleft centers and then continued in local speech therapy units (affiliated to public schools national network or in private practice).

Psychological support in cleft patients is not available on a regular basis in the public healthcare system.

Emergency Clinical Hospital for Children “Marie Curie”, Bucharest is providing medical care for children from newborn to teenager age (0-18 years old). It is the largest pediatric hospital in the country, counting almost 500 beds. Most of the medical specialties are represented, a great variety of congenital malformations being treated by various surgical specialists.

In our institution, cleft treatment consists in:

- Surgical treatment, primary and secondary correction, including velopharyngoplasty and alveolar bone grafting (pediatric surgery)
- ENT
- Orthodontic treatment – throughout an external specialist having a part-time contract
- Psychological support available
- Speech therapy - external, private hospital

Our team is not trained in SLT. On the other hand, psychological support has been well improved by several courses included in various international projects.

Current challenges in providing care for patients and families affected by cleft in our institution and across the country are: SLT treatment, orthodontic treatment and long term management and follow-up of these patients.

Unfortunately, in our country/society, people with cleft are still stigmatized, especially in the rural area or in the poor communities. Access to psychological support is not available for all the patients or families, and even if it is, that is usually made in private practice.

Challenges faced by people distressed by their appearance is not a priority for our government as there are no national programs aiming these issues.

Sources:

1. *National Institute of Statistics* ; <https://insse.ro/cms/en>

2. *Health information system in Romania Assessment of HIS in Romania, March 6-7th, 2019*
https://insp.gov.ro/sites/cnepss/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/HIS_Romania_Final.pdf