

Domain: Health statistics

THE ACTIVITY OF THE MEDICAL AND HEALTHCARE PROTECTION NETWORK IN 2021

In 2021

- over 65 thousand healthcare units were in operation and there were, on average, 279 inhabitants¹ per doctor (excluding dentists)
- hospitals treated 2.7 million cases as inpatients, 35 thousand cases more than in 2020
- 17629 inpatient beds were allocated for treating COVID-19 patients, of which 1435 beds in ICUs

In 2021, the activity of the medical and healthcare protection network was marked by the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic and, consequently, by the measures taken by the central and local authorities in order to prevent the spread of the virus. Under these circumstances, the activities of the (public and private) healthcare system were performed in over **65 thousand healthcare units** (53 thousand healthcare units in the urban area and 12 thousand healthcare units in the rural area), approximately 2 thousand units more than the previous year.

According to the breakdown by main categories of units, in 2021, the healthcare network included: 543 hospitals, compared to 535 hospitals in 2020; 160 units assimilated to hospitals that provide only day care hospitalisation services or ambulatory care and day care hospitalisation services², 10 units more

than the previous year; approximately 14 thousand independent specialised doctors' offices, 1276 units more than in 2020; over 16 thousand independent dentists' offices, 527 units more than the previous year; over 10 thousand family doctors' offices, a decrease of 182 offices compared to 2020.

The pharmaceutical network provided services through 9.9 thousand pharmacies, drugstores and pharmaceutical points, 97 units more than in 2020.

Out of the 703 hospitals, healthcare centres with hospital beds and units assimilated to hospitals that were in operation in 2021, only 350 were large medical units (with more than 100 beds) and 272 were small medical units (with less than 50 beds).

Table 1 The number of independent family doctors' offices and pharmaceutical units by area of residence in 2020 and 2021

Type of unit	Total		Urban		Rural	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
Independent family doctors' offices (units)	10652	10470	6385	6333	4267	4137
- offices per 10,000 inhabitants ¹	5.5	5.5	6.2	6.2	4.8	4.6
- average number of inhabitants ¹ per office	1809	1834	1625	1626	2084	2153
Pharmacies, drugstores and pharmaceutical points (units)	9828	9925	6075	6136	3753	3789
- units per 10,000 inhabitants ¹	5.1	5.2	5.9	6.0	4.2	4.3
- average number of inhabitants ¹ per unit	1961	1935	1708	1678	2369	2350

¹ For the calculation of the relative indicators, the resident population on July 1, 2020 was used. Because the data related to the resident population on July 1, 2021 are not currently available, the resident population on January 1 was used to calculate the relative indicators for 2021.

² Medical centres, diagnosis and treatment centres, healthcare centres and other medical units assimilated to hospitals that provide only day care hospitalisation services (they do not provide inpatient care services) or day care hospitalisation and ambulatory care services. Multi-purpose healthcare centres, the health and social care units that also provide day care hospitalisation services and dialysis centres are not included in the units assimilated to hospitals.

- **Primary healthcare**

The **primary healthcare, provided through the network of family doctors' offices**, represents the first contact of the population with the healthcare system, both for the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and for conducting preventive medical tests.

A larger number of family doctors' offices operated in the urban area, 6.3 thousand offices compared to 4.1 thousand offices in the rural area. In the rural area there were 1.3 times more inhabitants¹ (belonging to the resident population) per family doctor's office than in the urban area.

- **Specialised ambulatory care**

The **specialised ambulatory care** is provided by specialised units such as specialised ambulatory care facilities, medical and dental centres,

polyclinics, diagnosis and treatment centres etc., units that are mostly located in the urban area.

The network of independent specialised doctors' offices and of independent dentists' offices – which forms part of the ambulatory care system – is also predominantly located in the urban area.

While 12.9 thousand independent specialised doctors' offices were in operation in the urban area in 2021, their number was 20 times smaller in the rural area (only 646 offices), with the average number of inhabitants¹ per independent specialised doctor's office being 17 times higher in the rural area than in the urban area.

In 2021, in the rural area there were, on average, only 0.7 independent specialised doctors' offices per 10,000 inhabitants¹, (0.6 offices in 2020), compared to 12.5 such offices in the urban area (11.3 offices in 2020).

Table 2 The number of independent specialised doctors' offices and independent dentists' offices by area of residence in 2020 and 2021

Type of unit	Total		Urban		Rural	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
Independent specialised doctors' offices (units)	12276	13552	11743	12906	533	646
- independent specialised doctors' offices per 10,000 inhabitants ¹	6.4	7.1	11.3	12.5	0.6	0.7
- average number of inhabitants ¹ per independent specialised doctor's office	1570	1417	884	798	16681	13785
Independent dentists' offices (units)	15650	16177	13374	13834	2276	2343
- independent dentists' offices per 10,000 inhabitants ¹	8.1	8.4	12.9	13.4	2.6	2.6
- average number of inhabitants ¹ per independent dentist's office	1231	1187	776	744	3906	3801

[The table data in .xls format](#)

- **The medical care provided to inpatients and day care patients by healthcare units**

In 2021, the 703 hospitals and units assimilated to hospitals that were in operation had at their disposal **135.1 thousand beds for inpatients** (124.9 thousand beds in the urban area and 10.2 thousand beds in the rural area) and **9.9 thousand beds for day care patients** (only 410 beds in the rural area). In 2021, the hospitals and the units assimilated to hospitals provided care services to 2.7 million inpatients and 3.6 million day care patients, 0.5 million patients more compared to 2020, when 5.8 million patients (including both inpatients and day care patients) were treated.

As regards the number of hospital beds made available, the highest number of beds

(133 thousand beds, accounting for 91.4% of the total) was available to patients in large hospitals (units with more than 100 beds each), 7 thousand beds (4.9%) were available in medium-size hospitals (units with 50-99 beds), and 5 thousand beds (3.7%) were available in small hospitals (with less than 50 beds).

In 2021, by Order No 434/26.03.2021 of the Minister of Health concerning the approval of the [Plan of measures](#) on the organisation of hospitals and dialysis units in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, a network of units that provided medical care to patients who tested positive for COVID-19 or who were suspected of having COVID-19 was reorganised. Depending on the evolution of the number of cases, the number of beds for both inpatient care and ICUs had to be rethought. These measures had a strong

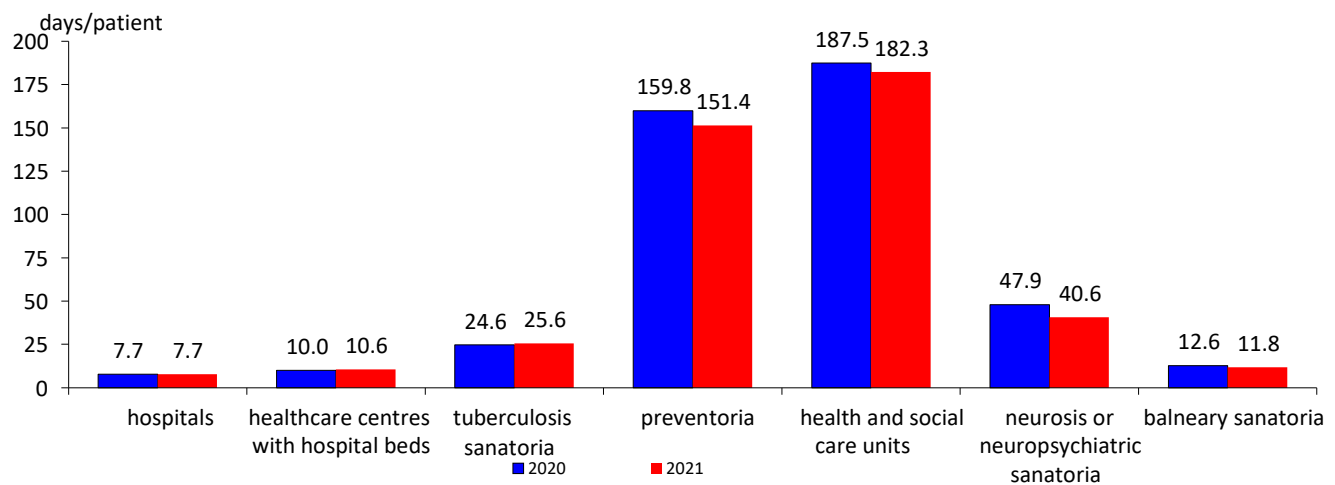
influence on the activities and resources of hospitals, with the distribution of beds by speciality being one of the relevant indicators for the analysis of this period's impact on hospital units.

Thus, 17629 inpatient beds were allocated for treating COVID-19 patients (accounting for 13.1% of the total number of inpatient beds). Most of these beds were distributed to the infectious diseases speciality (accounting for 23.6% of total COVID-19 beds and 68.9% of total beds allocated to this speciality, respectively) and to the

pulmonology speciality (accounting for 12.7% of total COVID-19 beds and 26.7% of total beds allocated to this speciality, respectively). In ICUs, 1435 beds were allocated for COVID-19 patients, accounting for 8.1% of total COVID-19 beds and 24.9% of total ICU beds.

The public sector undertook the care of most COVID-19 patients, with 98.4% of inpatient beds allocated to COVID-19 belonging to public hospitals and 282 inpatient beds of the private sector being used for the care of COVID-19 patients.

Fig. 1 The average length of stay in healthcare units with beds in 2020 and 2021



[The graph data in .xls format](#)

In 2021, the average length of hospital stay was 7.7 days/patient. Out of the total number of hospitals, 8 healthcare centres with hospital beds (6 centres in the rural area) provided inpatient medical care, for at least two specialities, to patients from various localities, and the average length of hospital stay was 10.6 days/patient.

The patients with health and social care needs benefitted, on average, from 182.3 days/patient of medical and social care services in health and social care units.

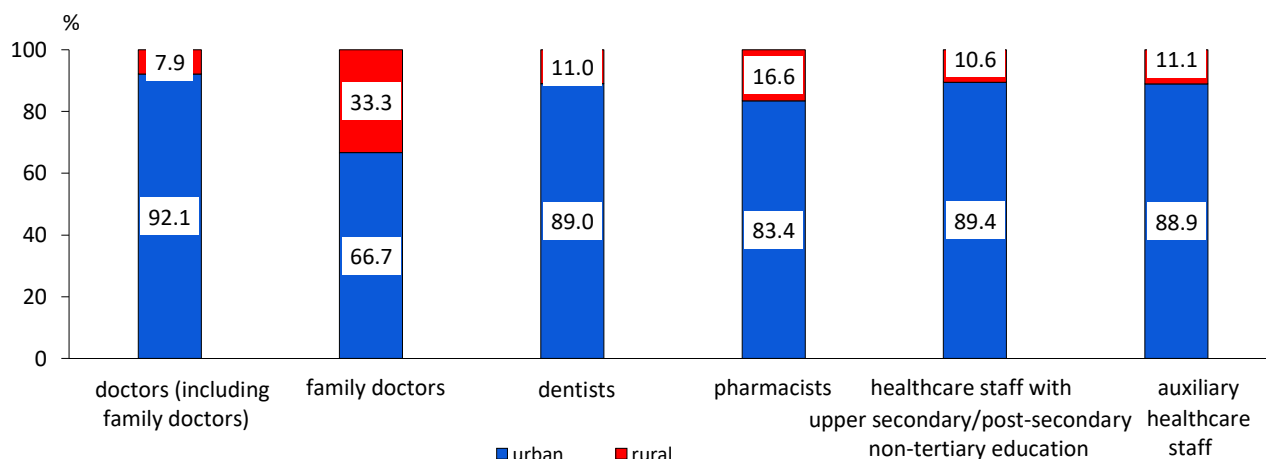
The prevention and control of tuberculosis as well as the treatment of stabilised patients were done, on average, for inpatients, during 151.4 days/patient in the two preventoria, while the treatment of patients with tuberculosis was done, on average, during 25.6 days/patient in the two specialised sanatoria.

• **The healthcare staff**

As regards the healthcare staff, in 2021, the healthcare system included 68.8 thousand doctors, an increase of 3.0 thousand doctors compared to 2020; 20.0 thousand dentists, 1.5 thousand dentists more than in 2020; 21.5 thousand pharmacists, an increase of 2.0 thousand pharmacists compared to the previous year; 155.6 thousand healthcare staff with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education, 2.9 thousand more than in 2020, and 76.1 thousand auxiliary healthcare staff, an increase of 2.1 thousand persons compared to 2020.

In 2021, 2.4 thousand physiokinesitherapists (0.2 thousand more than in 2020) and 18.0 thousand nurses with higher education (1.2 thousand more than in 2020) provided medical care in public and private units of the healthcare system. The healthcare staff is predominantly composed of women, who account for 70.6% of the doctors, 66.2% of the dentists and 89.8% of the pharmacists.

Fig. 2 The distribution of the main categories of healthcare staff by area of residence in 2021



[The graph data in .xls format](#)

In 2021, the number of doctors (excluding dentists) increased by 3020 compared to 2020, 2080 (68.9%) of which were resident physicians, with the highest rises being directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic, which was reflected by an increase in the number of specialists for the main medical specialities involved in the treatment of COVID-19 patients and in the management of the activities meant to prevent the spread of the virus. The medical specialities with an important role in the management of the COVID-19 pandemic and which reported increases in the number of doctors in 2021 compared to 2020 were: infectious diseases, where the number of doctors rose by 14.3%, pulmonology, with an increase of 11.9%, anaesthesia and intensive care, with a rise of 8.7%, epidemiology, with an increase of 8.6%, public healthcare and management, with a rise of 14.6%, and hygiene, with an increase of 19.0%.

The distribution of the healthcare staff by area of residence is determined by the territorial distribution of healthcare units, with the existing major discrepancies being maintained.

Out of the total number of doctors, approximately one fifth were family doctors, with two thirds of them working in the urban area.

In 2021, as in the previous year, the differences in available healthcare staff between the areas of residence are indicated by the greater number of inhabitants¹ (belonging to the resident population) per healthcare staff member in the rural area than in the urban area, namely: 10 times more inhabitants¹ per doctor (1.7 times more inhabitants per family doctor), 7 times more inhabitants¹ per dentist and 4 times more inhabitants¹ per pharmacist.

Additional information:

For an accurate interpretation of the indicators, please see the [Methodological explanations attached to the press release on the homepage](#). More information can be found in the publication "The activity of the medical and healthcare protection network in 2021".

The next press release on the activity of the medical and healthcare protection network will be issued in July 2023.

Press release archive: <http://www.insse.ro/cms/en/comunicate-de-presa-view>

Communication Directorate

E-mail: biroupresa@insse.ro; telephone: +4021 3181869