

CHAPTER 2

COUNTRY REPORTS/ BRIEF REPORTS ON SITUATION IN PARTNER COUNTRIES

Empowering Marginalized Elders
SPAIN



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2.1. ELDERLIES IN SPAIN PROFILE

For 2050, Spain will be the second most aged country in the world (after Japan),

33 per cent of the population 65 or more years

12 per cent aged 80 and over

(United Nations Organisation, 2006)

Spain counts with more than 7.780.830 persons over 65 years old

the 16,7% of total population in Spain

(Institute of the Elderly and Social Services, 2009a)

THE HEALTH OF THE ELDERLY IN SPAIN

Although institutionalisation rates in Spain are lower than in other European countries, among those aged 85 and over, they are almost four times higher than among the total elderly population and depend on variables such as sex, socio-economic position, family characteristics and health.

(Arber and Cooper, 1999; Grundy and Jitlal, 2007; IMSERSO, 2006)

‘Ageing at home’

In Spain, as in the rest of Europe, the majority of elderly people prefer to live in their homes (77%), and only with their children or in institutions as the last options in case of need

(IMSERSO, 2007) .

‘Ageing at home’

The importance of developing specific policies oriented towards elderly people facing disabilities and their families. requires the expansion of public care services, to date very underdeveloped in Spain:

- such as respite services to the family of the dependants,
- the expansion of home visits to elderly people by health professionals,
- the adaptation of housing to the ageing process.

2.2. EME in Spain

An integrated approach to socio-economic inequalities, simultaneously studying indicators of household living standards, household structure and social support is needed both in research on inequalities in health as well as in social and health policies addressed to elderly people.

RUEDA AND ARTAZCOZ (2009)

Living alone was associated with poor mental health status in both sexes

It can have different meanings for elderly men and women, with a high negative impact on women's mental health

- 'feminisation of poverty' (Pearce 1978)
- higher widowhood rates among women
- association between deprivation and poor mental health among women

THE INSTITUTIONALIZED ELDERLY

Have had to leave their homes, their environment and family that lived with, most of their belongings, daily activities, habits, and they must cope with a new transition time in their lives, normally linked with losses of capacities and associated diseases to aging, and at the same time, adaptation to the institutionalised new life (Rubio & Aleixandre, 2001)

The relationship of institutionalized elderly with their family is very poor and with low quality

“loneliness in the community”

Social isolation, lack of social networks, marginalization, uprooted, might relate to “being alone”, but the real loneliness is related to “feeling alone” (homesickness, sadness, yearning)

(Otero-Rodríguez et al. 2011)

it has been found that elderly people with more social links presented lower risks of mortality, cognitive deterioration, depression and disability, and even higher probabilities of recovering after a disability

CONCLUSIVELY

Elders in the Spanish society suffer from various types of abuse, among which the emotional one has the strongest impact and is the most frequently exerted

The economic situation is the main reason leading to elder abuse

It was furthermore depicted that abuse can have a tremendous effect on the psychological health of the elder
Abuse also affects the family and the society since it weakens family bonds, and increases the gap between society members.

"The most immutable barrier in nature is that
between the thought of a man
and that of another. "
(WILLIAM JAMES)

