



This Bulletin on the impact of the socio-economic crisis in the people assisted by the Red Cross is part of a research programme that began in 2009.

In this Bulletin, we specifically consider the problem of health and healthcare. This is because, in our social intervention, we detected that social insecurity -sustained over time- has negative consequences both for health and for health care. In order to confirm this perception, we conducted a survey based on a statistical representative sample of the assisted population.

As in former editions, the Bulletin presents abundant and significant socio-demographic data, information on income, employment status and housing, social life and relationships, as well as the self-perception of respondents on different matters. It also includes an analysis of material

deprivation rates, of households with low or no employment intensity, and of relative poverty -- the three factors that define risk situations of poverty and exclusion (AROPE). There are separated analysis for households with members of working age, and households headed by the elderly.

The findings show a high proportion of unemployed people —many of them have exhausted benefits and lack protection—, an increase of housing problems and of severe material deprivation. The disaggregated analysis by gender also highlights the *feminization of social vulnerability*.

The differential nature of this Bulletin --regarding other research bulletins-- lies in the inclusion of specific data on the incidence of chronic diseases or health problems, accident rates and access to healthcare. This analysis allows us to estimate the influence of social determinants on the respondents' health conditions.

THE SAMPLE

Computer Assisted Telephonic Interviews, carried out on December 2013.

Respondents: 1,046 people, distributed among the participants of the Spanish Red Cross' Social Intervention Programmes.

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES

- Gender: 60% female; 40% male
- Age: mean 54.3 years; 60% are under 56 years and 40% over 56.
- Origin: 47.6% are Spanish and 52.4% are foreign.

ECONOMIC PROBLEMS ARE THE MOST OUTSTANDING

- The average monthly income is 555.3 euros per person.
- Fourteen percent of respondents say they do not have any income.

- The unemployment rate approaches 65%. A 64.5% does not have any social coverage (does not receive unemployment benefit or minimum income). Seventy five percent have been unemployed for more than a year.
- Six percent of working age people are employed in the underground economy.
- The working poverty rate reaches 81.8%.
- The biggest problem is that families cannot make ends meet.

GROWING REPORTED HOUSING PROBLEMS

- Housing problems are the third in importance, after economic difficulties and loneliness (there are many people living alone, especially among the elderly).
- For those who are experiencing housing problems, the most significant difficulties are that they cannot pay the rent; that they cannot afford the utilities bills (electricity, gas, telephone) or community fees, and that they cannot pay their mortgages.

THE FAMILY IS STILL THE MAIN SUPPORT SCHEME, ESPECIALLY FOR PEOPLE WITHOUT INCOME

- Together with the family, the Red Cross and the Social Services are the key sources of support.
- However, social capital is weakening. While approximately 60% of people still has "someone who supports and encourages them", only 30.7% can "always" or "almost always" count with significant financial support.
- Data on indicators of poverty and social exclusion show that the share of people with severe material deprivation has grown nearly by 7 percentage points, reaching the 38%. Within this group, women are 60.2%, and elderly people make up a 12%. Households with children represent the 45.8% of the overall.
- A 41.6% of households cannot keep their homes warm during the cold months. A 23.4% cannot make a meal with protein, such as meat, chicken or fish (or vegetarian equivalent), at least every other day.
- A 81.7% of the people live below the poverty line, ie, have incomes below 676.2 euros. A 58.6% live in extreme poverty (below 40% of the median income, which is 450.8 euros per month).
- In 41.3% of those households under the poverty threshold live children.
- A 28.7% of households have all their adult members unemployed. A 79% of lone-parent families are in this situation.
- Overall, the risk of poverty and exclusion (ARPE) affects the 84% of the population assisted by the Red Cross. The ARPE for the population of Spain is 27.3%.

CONCLUSIONS RELATED TO HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE PROBLEMS

- The 56.8% of respondents considered that, in the last year, their health has been "good" or "very good" (in the population of Spain, the same percentage peaks to 75.3%).
- The factors of gender, age and living with disabilities are associated with more negative health self-perceptions.
- These perceptions are more negative among women, at all ages. They also deepen with ageing; particularly in the age group 65 to 79 years, (21% think their health is "bad" or "very bad"). Another factor that influences this negative assessment is to have a disability, which affects a 14.5% of the surveyed population (32.5% in the case of the Red Cross and 34.7% in the Spanish population).
- A 34% of people said they suffer from an illness, a chronic or long-term health problem, more than doubling the percentage of the Spanish population.

- Social vulnerability has implications in mood: 37% of respondents feel tense or nervous, “always” or “almost always”. Among them, women of working age are the majority. A 50% say they always have "their heads full of worries". A 32% admit they “never” or “almost never have enthusiasm for things”.
- A 97.4% of the respondents use the public health system. Over 70% believe that the health services provided are “good” or “very good”.
- A 35.1% had financial difficulties to cover expenses related to their healthcare in the last year. The most frequent troubles were not being able to afford those medicines no longer covered by the Social Security, having no funds to pay for the dentist, and having to face the medicines co-payment. A 1.5% have no Insurance or Health card.
- Being at risk of poverty and social exclusion (AROPE) adversely affects their health status, which is reflected in the higher incidence of acute and chronic diseases. It also affects the economic difficulties for their own health care.



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