

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
United Nations Children's Fund

Expert meeting on statistics on children

Geneva, Switzerland, 4–6 March 2024

Item 2 of the provisional agenda

Innovative approaches to data collection on children

Children's situation at the 2021 population and housing census and new statistics under EU population and housing statistics regulation

Note by the Romanian National Institute of Statistics

Abstract

The 2021 Population and Housing Census (PHC) in Romania provides important data on the situation of children with usual residence in the country. In addition to the data collected by the 2021 PHC, the National Institute of Statistics (INS) will produce statistical indicators on usual residence population in accordance with the new Regulation on European statistics on population and housing.

This paper presents a comprehensive analysis of the data on children with usual residence in Romania, as provided by 2021 PHC and a critical insight into various facets of children situation.

Also, paper outlines the new statistical indicators that the INS will produce annually, according to the new European legislation, and proposes the inclusion of some of them in the Community Risk Index methodology developed by UNICEF. The proposal aims to improve the Community Risk Index, providing a more nuanced and effective tool for assessing and addressing risks faced by children in various communities.

This paper not only focuses on the current state of children in Romania, but also determines more informed, targeted, and impactful policy-making and interventions to improve child welfare in the European context.

*Prepared by Monica-Ioana Rafu, Ana-Maria Ciuhu, Silvia Pisciã

NOTE: The designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

I. Introduction

1. The 2021 Population and Housing Census (PHC) in Romania has collected vital information about population living in the country. Furthermore, the Romanian National Institute of Statistics (INS) is set to compile a set of indicators for the population with usual residence, in line with the latest European regulations on population and housing statistics.
2. This paper offers an analysis of the data regarding population residing in Romania, at previous Censuses and in PHC 2021. Some insights regarding demographic projections are presented. The PHC 2021 presented data contains also data on children, female population aged 11 and over, by the total number of live births, active and inactive population. Additionally, we have presented population projected for 2025 – 2100 and the difference between usual residence and legal residence on population aged 0-19.

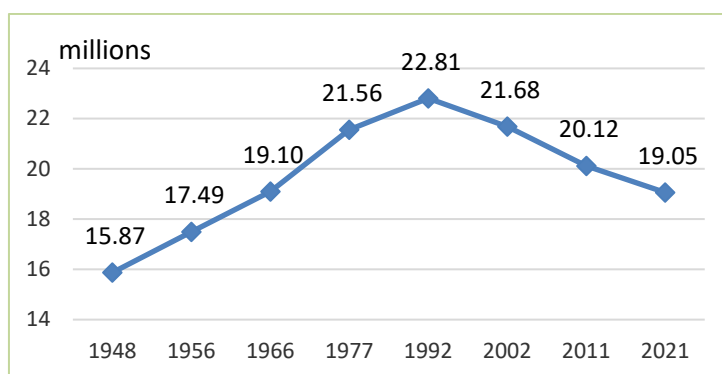
II. Romanian Population and Housing Censuses

A. General trends in population

3. To introduce the historical population trends of Romania, it is important to understand the shifts seen from the mid-20th century to the present. Starting with a significant increase in population post-WWII, the country's population continued to rise due to state policies promoting higher birth rates. However, this trend reversed in the early '90s, with a noticeable population decrease continuing into the 21st century, mainly due to lower birth rates and higher emigration rates.

Figure 1

Romanian population registered at PHC 1948, 1956, 1966, 1977, 1992, 2002, 2011 and 2021



Source: INS Romania, 2021 PHC results

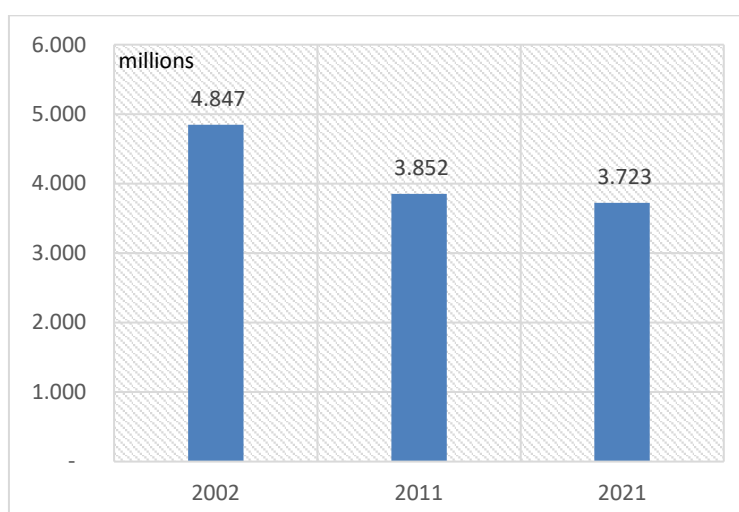
4. Analysing Romania's population trends from the 1948 to 2021 censuses reveals the following aspects:

5. Post-war growth (1948-1966): Following World War II, Romania experienced substantial demographic growth, similar to other European countries, the population increasing from about 15.9 million in 1948 to nearly 19.1 million persons in 1966. This trend can be attributed to the high birth rate in the post-war period and a decrease in infant mortality.
6. Consistent growth up to the 1990s (1966-1992): Population growth persisted, peaking at around 22.8 million in 1992. This increase can be assigned to the communist regime's pronatalist policy, which imposed restrictions on abortions and contraceptives, and encouraged childbirth through various incentives.
7. Population decline (1992-2021): Post-1992, Romania's population began to decline, a trend that continued up to the latest census in 2021, when the population fell to 19.05 million. The primary factors contributing to the decline in the resident population include:
 - Romania's accession to the European Union in 2007, which facilitated labour market access and freedom of movement, leading to an increase in migration, represented mainly by a young population able to work, corresponding to the fertile age;
 - Increasing the age at which young people choose to marry, in Romania most of the children are born within marriage;
 - Delay in the age at which young mothers choose to have their first child and the reduction in the number of children born per couple;
 - A decrease in birth rates.

B. Children population at Romanian Censuses

8. The situation on children (aged 0-17) by usual residence over last three Censuses is shown in the figure below.

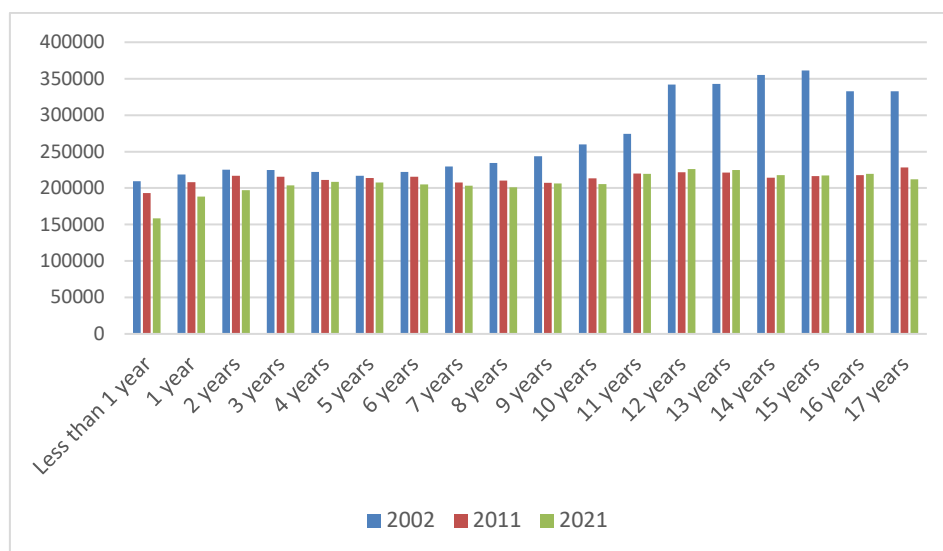
Figure 2
Children's situation on PHC 2002, 2011, 2021



Source: INS Romania, 2002, 2011 and 2021 PHC results

9. From 2002 to 2011, child population decreased by 995.6 thousands. This signifies a notable decline of approximately 20.5% over the intercensus period. Between 2011 and 2021, the child population decreased further by 128.9 thousand. This represents a smaller reduction rate of approximately 3.3% over the period. Overall, from 2002 to 2021, there was a significant decline in the child population by more than 1.1 million (1,124,608) i.e. nearly 23.2%.

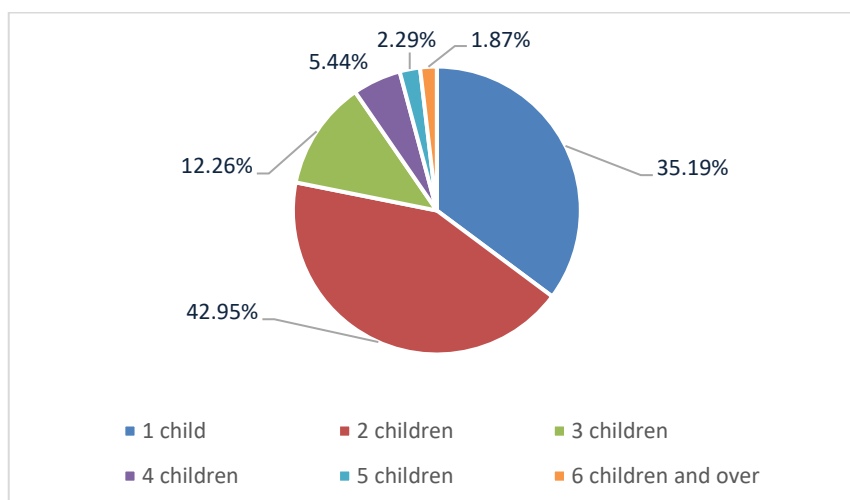
Figure 3
Children by age registered on PHC 2002, 2011, 2021



Source: INS Romania, 2002, 2011 and 2021 PHC results

10. The data from the last three censuses (2002, 2011, and 2021) show a general decline in the population of younger age groups over time, particularly noticeable in the "Less than 1 year" category. While certain age groups recorded increases from 2002 to 2021, the overall trend suggests a decrease in the number of children per age group.

Figure 4
The share of the female population aged 11 and over, by the total number of live births



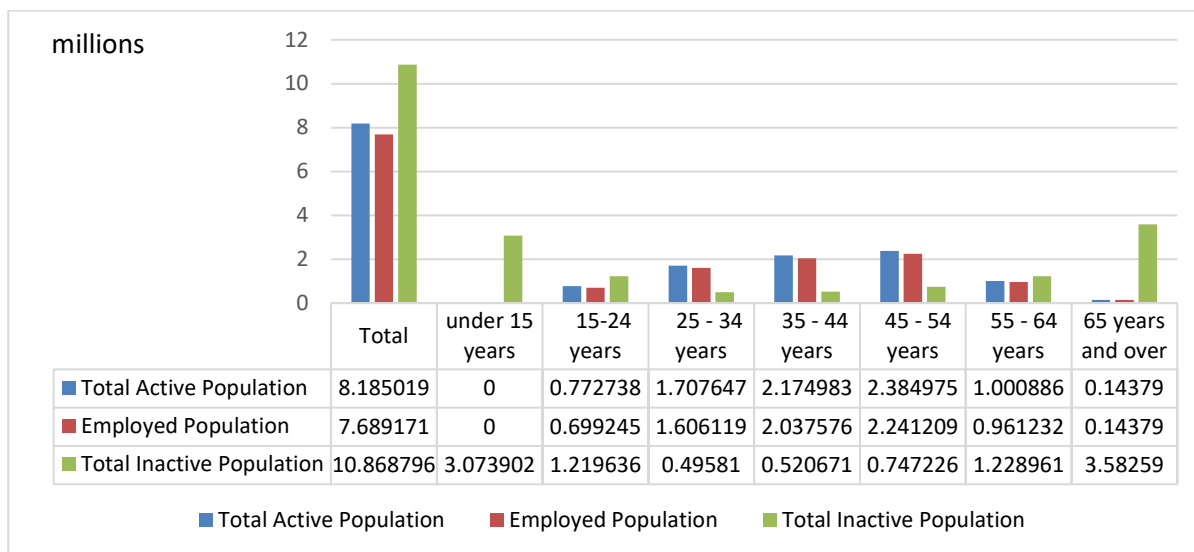
Source: INS Romania, 2002, 2011 and 2021 PHC results

11. As a pattern, Romanian families prefer a reduce number of children, i.e. one or two. Thus, more than three quarters (78.14%) of women are in this situation, with one or two children. Women with one child represent 35.19% of the total, while those with two children registered 42.95%. The percentage decreases as the number of children increases, with 12.26% of women having three children, 5.44% with four children, 2.29% with five children, and only 1.87% with six or more children.
12. This distribution suggests that economic and social factors are likely influencing family size, with most women opting for one or two children, aligning with a broader trend of declining population growth. Women choose to complete their studies and focus on their own careers, a phenomenon that is especially evident in urban areas. The relatively small percentages for larger families (three children and above) further highlight that having more than two children is becoming increasingly uncommon.

C. Active and inactive population on PHC 2021

13. The employed population on PHC2021 is defined as all individuals aged 15 and over who, during the reference week, were engaged in any paid economic or social activity for at least one hour, or worked exceptionally or occasionally to earn income, including those who assisted a household member in their own enterprise or in independent professional activities, regardless of remuneration (INS Romania, 2021).

Figure 5
Active and inactive resident population by sex and age groups, as of December 1, 2021



Source: INS Romania, 2021 PHC results

14. The data shows the active and employed segments of the population by age. Over 8 million, aged 15 years and more, are economically active persons, with employment rates decreasing as age increases. The employed population mirrors this trend closely. Notably, the inactive population is larger, with significant numbers in the very young, presumably due to schooling, and in the over 65 bracket, likely due to retirement. The prime working-age groups, 25-44 years, show the highest employment figures, while the 15-24 age group has a large inactive segment, which could suggest a high student population. Overall, employment trends decline with age, as expected in a typical workforce distribution.

D. Population projection for 2025 - 2100

15. Eurostat (2024) has developed usual residence population projections presented in the figures below.

Figure 6
EU-27 population projection, 2025–
2100

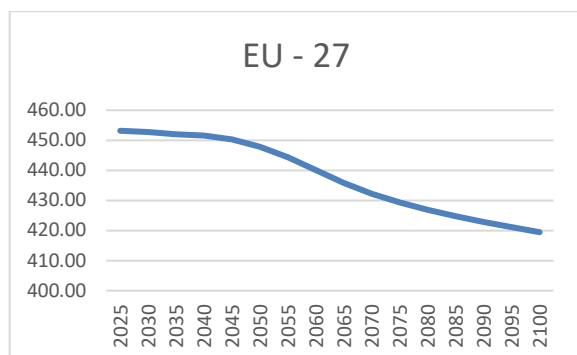
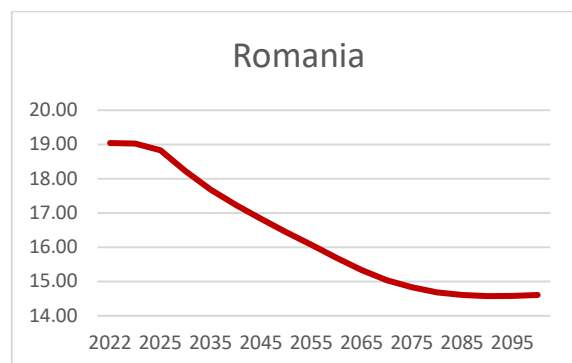


Figure 7
Romania population projection, 2025–
2100



Source: Eurostat Database, online data code proj_23np

16. The projected population data for the European Union (EU) and Romania from 2025 to 2100 show a significant demographic decline. The EU is expected to see a modest increase in population, reaching about 453 million by 2025. However, following this period of growth, a gradual and continuous decrease in population is anticipated, with the population estimated to reduce to around 419 million by the century's end. This decline is likely influenced by various factors such as decreasing birth rates, changes in migration patterns, and the impact of an aging population.
17. Romania's population is forecasted to register a more significant decline, i.e. from 18.8 million in 2025 to approximately 14.6 million by 2100. This sharp decrease indicates Romania will face, also in the future, with high emigration rates, a consistent drop in birth rates, and a demographic aging.
18. According to INS Romania (2016), the scholar population aged 0-23 forecasted for 2030 is 4.25 million. The same indicator forecasted for 2060 is 2.92 million. Currently, the scholar population registered in Romania is 3.47 million (INS Romania, 2024).

E. Usual versus legal residence population

19. “The population by legal residence refers to the number of persons with Romanian citizenship and permanent residence on the territory of Romania, defined according to administrative-territorial criteria. The concept is linked with the domicile of a person which is the address that they declare as their main residence, as recorded in their identity card and as registered in the records of the state's administrative bodies” (INS Romania, 2018).
20. “The usual resident population comprises all individuals with Romanian citizenship, foreigners, and stateless persons who have their usual residence on the territory of Romania.
21. The usual residence represents the place where a person typically spends their daily rest period, regardless of temporary absences for leisure, holidays, visits to friends and relatives, business, medical treatment, or religious pilgrimages. It is considered that persons have their usual residence in a specific geographical area only if they have lived at their usual residence

2022), across counties in Romania. Significant discrepancies are observed between the two figures for each county, indicating changes in the resident versus legal populations of young individuals within the year.

27. The most significant decrease in the resident population of young individuals is seen in Bucharest, with a notable reduction of approximately 14.20%. Similarly, Vaslui also shows a substantial decrease of around 14.18%.
28. On the contrary, Ilfov stands out as the county with the highest increase, with its population of young residents rising by around 19.18%.
29. The smallest changes in the population are registered in counties such as Vâlcea, with an almost negligible decrease of just 0.12%, and Călărași, which actually shows an increase of about 0.87%.

III. Results

30. Developed in 2015, updated in 2021 and 2023, by UNICEF jointly with other institutions, the Community Risk Index supports the scale-up of community-based services and targets vulnerable children under national plans. Seven key indicators are used, including the share of children, type of locality, risk of poverty rate or social exclusion (AROPE), Family Allowance Support, unemployment rate, school enrolment rate, and presence of family doctors.
31. The index primarily aims in prioritizing localities for integrated community services and can track community risk levels over time. Current and future developments on data by INS Romania may be considered for adjusting the index.
32. This approach integrates new statistical indicators mandated by new Regulation on European statistics on population and housing (EUR-Lex, 2024). The INS Romania will adapt to this regulation by replacing locality-based legal population data with usual residence population data in Romania by counties and localities, along with demographic indicators. New statistical indicators that could be considered for the index computation are:
 - children born by minor mothers;
 - active and employed population;
 - NEET rate i.e. share of young people who are not in employment, education or training, as a percentage of the total number of young people in the corresponding age group, by gender.

IV. Conclusion

33. These enhancements aim to provide a more precise tool for assessing and addressing the risks faced by children in different communities. Nevertheless, another important considered aspect is the replacement of the legal population currently included in the index with the usual residence population. By transitioning from legal population metrics to those based on usual residence and supplementing this with additional demographic indicators, this paper advocates for a more precise and responsive index.

34. A current limitation is that such detailed data are only available at the NUTS 3 level; however, with the progression towards establishing a comprehensive Population Register, more detailed demographic data at the localities level will enhance in the future for precision of planning and policy-making.

V. References

- EUR-Lex. (2024). Retrieved from <https://shorturl.at/hstK7>
- Eurostat. (2024). Eurostat Database. Luxembourg, Luxembourg, Luxembourg. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database?gclid=CjwKCAiA8NKtBhBtEiwAq5aX2MzUDX6-sHrhkiYtsks6GAup1e5jRYU3Z2S_XsKYIUUnRRlPzoiyWfBoC5XgQAvD_BwE
- INS Romania. (2003, July). PHC 2002 Results. Bucharest, Romania. Retrieved from https://insse.ro/cms/files/RPL2002INS/index_rpl2002.htm
- INS Romania. (2016). Proiectarea populației școlare din România la orizontul anului 2060.
- INS Romania. (2018). *Methodology of legal residence population*. Retrieved from insse.ro: https://insse.ro/cms/files/statistici/comunicate/com_anuale/populatie/precizari_metodologice_1ian2018.pdf
- INS Romania. (2021). *Metodologia de recenzare și de prelucrare a datelor*. Retrieved from https://www.recensamantromania.ro/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/anexa_Hotararea-nr-7_CCRPL2021_Metodologie-recenzare_prelucrare-date.pdf
- INS Romania. (2022). PHC 2021 Results. Bucharest, Romania. Retrieved from <https://www.recensamantromania.ro/rezultate-rpl-2021/rezultate-definitive/>
- INS Romania. (2023). Labour Force Balance at January 1, 2023. Bucharest, Romania. Retrieved from https://insse.ro/cms/sites/default/files/field/publicatii/balanta_forței_de_munca_la_1_ianuarie_2023_0.pdf
- INS Romania. (2023). Statistical Yearbook 2022. Bucharest, Romania. Retrieved from https://insse.ro/cms/sites/default/files/field/publicatii/anuarul_statistic_al_romaniei_carte-ed.2022.pdf
- INS Romania. (2024). Tempo online database. Retrieved from <http://statistici.insse.ro:8077/tempo-online/#/pages/tables/insse-table>
- INS Romania. (n.d.). PHC 2011 Results. Bucharest, Romania. Retrieved from <https://www.recensamantromania.ro/rpl-2011/rezultate-2011/>
- United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. (2022). *World Population Prospects 2022*. Geneva: United Nations. Retrieved from https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/undesapd_2022_wpp_key-messages.pdf