



Internationalisation of health workforce education: the case of medicine in Romania

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Background

Medical education in Romania

(Medical) Universities are autonomous in their decisions (*including the number of students to admit and train*)

The majority of students' training costs are subsidized by the Government

The Romanian Agency for Quality in Higher Education (ARACIS) is setting the ceilings for the number of students to be trained

The Ministry of Education is providing the necessary funding

The Ministry of Health is not formally involved in deciding the number of medical students



Background

Medical education in Romania

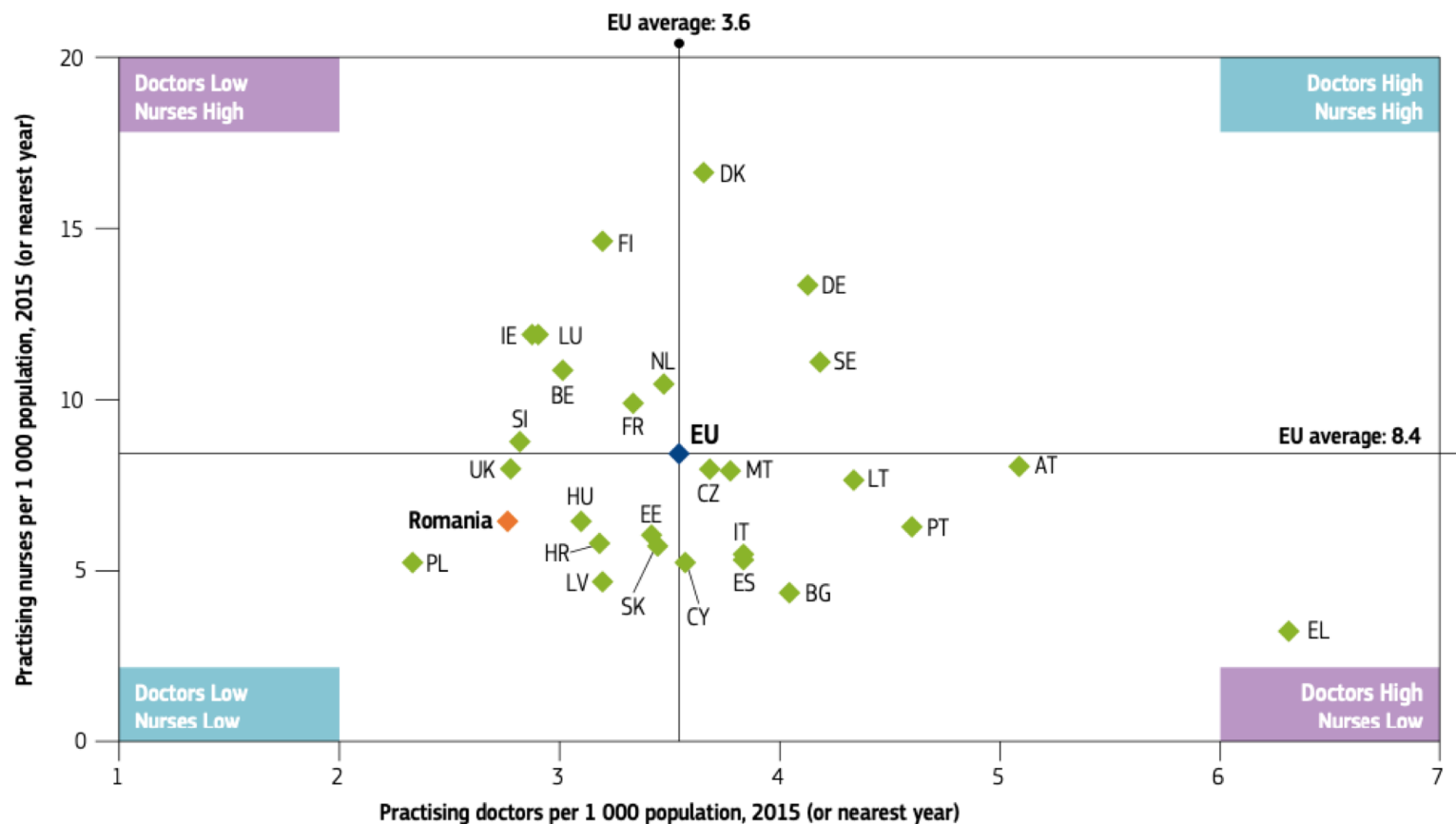
A total of 13 medical schools – 11 public and 2 private medical schools

Historically – high levels of health professional outflows, foreign students from non-EU countries (esp. Republic of Moldova)

Recently – increasingly attractive for international medical students, particularly from EU countries



Figure 8. Physician and nurse numbers in Romania are considerably below the EU average



Source: State of Health in the EU – Companion Report, available at:

https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/state/docs/2017_companion_en.pdf



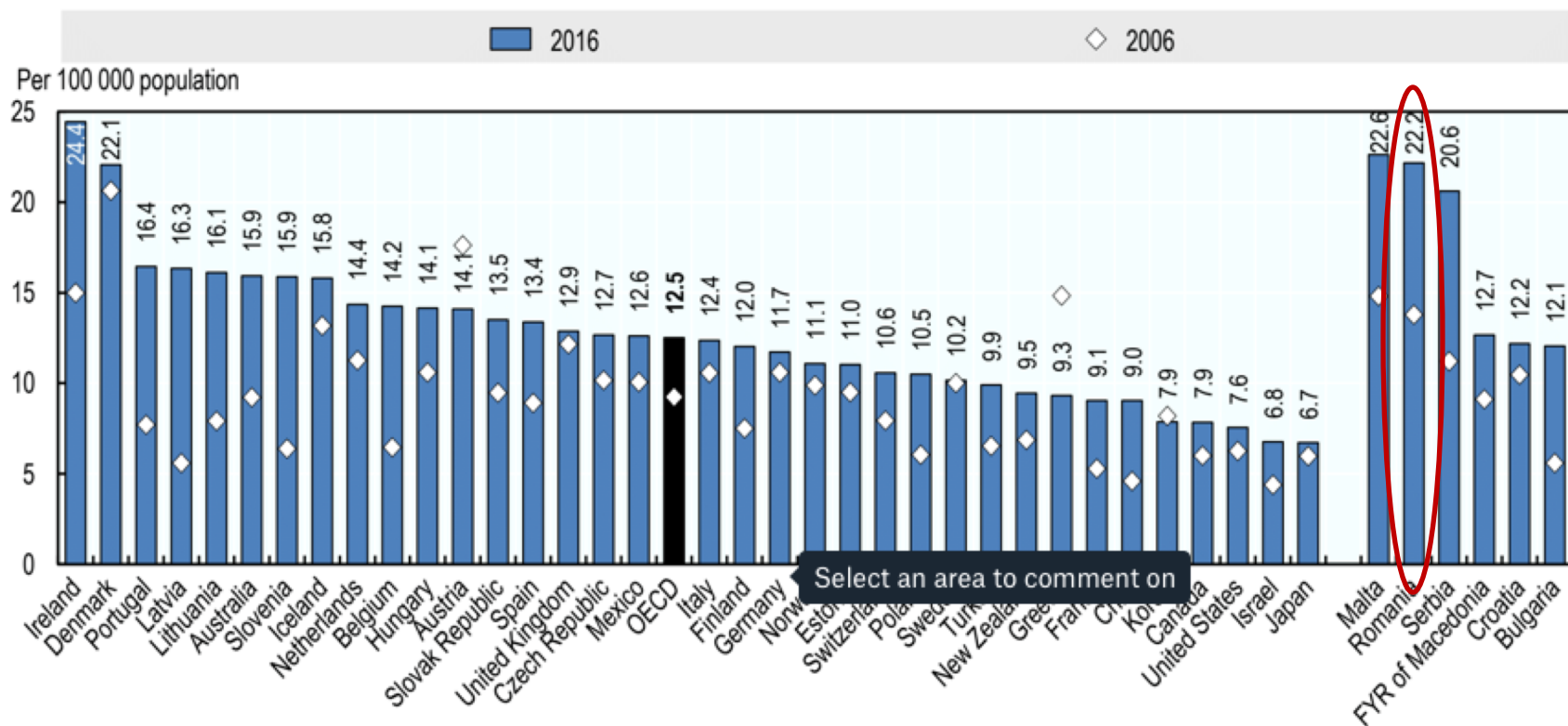
Number of practising doctors in Romania 2015-2017

	2015	2016	2017
Total no. of doctors	56,11	57,304	58,583
<i>Male</i>	<i>17,058</i>	<i>17,412</i>	<i>17,591</i>
<i>Female</i>	<i>39,052</i>	<i>39,892</i>	<i>40,992</i>
Family doctors	12,333	12,334	12,185
<i>Urban</i>	<i>7,735</i>	<i>7,846</i>	<i>7,701</i>
<i>Rural</i>	<i>4,598</i>	<i>4,488</i>	<i>4,484</i>

Sources: National Institute of Statistics



Number of medical school graduates



Source: OECD Health Statistics and Eurostat Database (based on OECD/Eurostat/WHO –Europe Joint Questionnaire)



Methods

Study undertaken in 2018

- *Literature review*
- *Secondary data analysis*
- *Key-informant interviews (education & health sectors in Romania)*
- *Interviews with international medical students (push & pull factors)*



Trends related to internationalization

Intensified efforts to either open or expand the capacity of medical programmes taught in English or French

In the academic year 2018/19:

- **10 of the 13 medical schools in Romania offered full programmes in English**
- 4 of the above 10 also offered full programmes in French

Drivers

- Additional income source
- Reputations and visibility at the national and international levels
- Improved curriculum and teaching methods



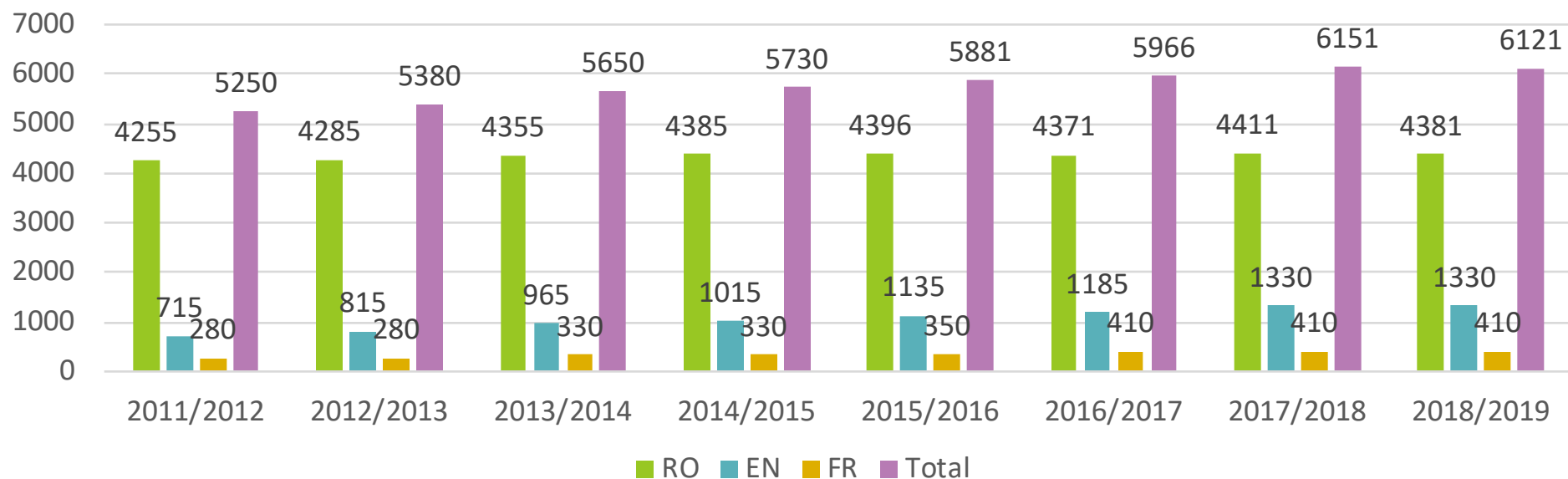
Annual fees for intl. students

Name of Medical School	Fee (in EUR)
Medical School Bucharest	6000
Medical School Brasov	4000
Medical School Cluj-Napoca	5000
Medical School Constanța	5000
Medical School Craiova	5000
Medical School Galați	4000
Medical School Iași	5000
Medical School Oradea	4800
Medical School Sibiu	3150
Medical School Târgu Mureș	5000
Medical School Timișoara	4500
*Private Medical School Arad	6250
*Private Medical School Bucharest	7000

Source: personal compilation on information publicly available on the websites of medical universities



Trends in the number of new-entrant places in medicine





Medical schools in Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca, Iași & Târgu Mureș

- The University of Medicine and Pharmacy Bucharest – expanded its annual new-entrant capacity in the English programme from **200 to 300 (+50%) between 2011/12 and 2018/19**
- The medical schools in Cluj-Napoca and Iași – **doubled the annual new-entrant capacity in their English programmes** and increased the capacity in their French programmes by 50% between 2011/12 and 2018/19
- The medical school in Târgu Mureș, the annual **new-entrant capacity of the English programme increased from 50 to 150 between 2011/12 and 2018/19**. The English programme accounts now for 35% of the school's capacity.



Residency training in Iași

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 (Jan-Jun)	TOTAL
Number of Romanian residents training abroad	145	182	185	175	115	802

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	TOTAL
Number of intl. residents training in Iași	1	2	11	10	16	40



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Push & pull factors for intl. students

- numerous clausus policies
- relatively low tuition fees compared to home countries
- relatively low living costs, especially compared to other EU countries
- recognition of medical diplomas throughout the EU
- relatively easy-to-achieve admission standards



Harmonising national health goals with medical education priorities

The National Health Strategy 2014-2020 includes a specific objective on implementing sustainable policies for human resources for health

A National Action Plan for Human Resources for Health is still pending approval (2016)

There is no planning process in place to link the needs of doctors with the number of medical students

The great majority of international students leave Romania after graduating – current policies to increase their retention are not fully operationalized

Efforts to bring key constituents at the same table are still scarce



Conclusions

Internationalization of Romanian medical education has taken place in an organic manner, in the absence of a formal internationalization strategy

No significant improvements in health workforce management in Romania

An urgent need to establish a formal health workforce planning process in Romania, linking decisions on the number of students with current and projected future demand for doctors

An urgent need to address low attractiveness of workplaces for either domestic or international medical graduates



Thank you!

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