

Eastern Mediterranean

The Eastern Mediterranean denotes the countries geographically to the east of the Mediterranean Sea (Levantine Seabasin). The Eastern Mediterranean populations share not only geographic position but also cuisine, certain customs and a long, intertwined history.

Regions

This eastern Mediterranean region is commonly interpreted in two ways:

The more broad definition of the Levant which includes its historically tied neighboring countries, Greece and Egypt. The region of Syria with the island of Cyprus (also known as the Levant), and Turkey, which limits the definition to Western Asia.

Countries

The countries and territories of the Eastern Mediterranean include Cyprus, Greece, Lebanon, Syria, Israel, Palestine, Turkey, Egypt, Libya, and Jordan. The countries under the term North-eastern Mediterranean could sometimes include Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece (usually included within Eastern Mediterranean countries) Slovenia, North Macedonia, Serbia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Romania, and Ukraine.

The Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) is experiencing a demographic shift towards rapid ageing at a time of political unrest. Fereshtehnejad et al., aimed to estimate the burden of neurodegenerative disorders, and its relationship with sociodemographic indicators (SDI) in the EMR countries from 1990 to 2016.

Using data from the Global Burden of Disease (GBD) 2016 study, they calculated country-specific trends for prevalence, mortality, disability-adjusted life-years (DALYs), years of life lost (YLLs), and years lived with disability (YLDs) for Alzheimer's disease/other dementias and Parkinson's disease in the EMR during 1990-2016.

In EMR, age-standardized prevalence rate of Alzheimer's disease/other dementias and Parkinson's disease was estimated at 759.8 (642.9-899.9) and 87.1 (69.8-108.2) /100,000 in 2016, demonstrating 0.01% and 42.3% change from 1990, respectively. Neurodegenerative disorders contributed to 5.4% of total DALYs and 4.6% of total YLDs among the older EMR population aged 70 years or older in 2016. Age-standardized DALYs due to Parkinson's disease was strongly correlated with the SDI level ($r=0.823$, $p\text{-value}<0.001$). The YLD/DALY ratio of neurodegenerative diseases declined during this period in the low income EMR countries but not in high income ones.

The findings demonstrated an increasing trend in the burden of [dementias](#) and [Parkinson's disease](#) in most EMR countries between 1990 and 2016. With aging of the EMR populations, countries should target the modifiable risk factors of [neurodegenerative diseases](#) to control their increasing burden ¹⁾.

1)

Fereshtehnejad SM, Vosoughi K, Heydarpour P, Sepanlou SG, Farzadfar F, Tehrani-Banihashemi A, Malekzadeh R, Sahraian MA, Vollset SE, Naghavi M, Vos T, Feigin V, Murray C, Mokdad AH, Moradi-Lakeh M. Burden of Neurodegenerative Diseases in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, 1990-2016: Findings from the Global Burden of Disease 2016 Study. *Eur J Neurol*. 2019 Apr 21. doi: 10.1111/ene.13972. [Epub ahead of print] PubMed PMID: 31006162.

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