Economic and Financial Studies on the Public Pension System in Romania at Local and Global Level

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Abstract: The National pension system, in the light of major economic and financial transactions that take place today, can be challenging, through the difficulties that they create and the solutions that they offer. This paper is a comprehensive study on the public pension system in Romania facing the current global crisis, based on local case studies in an attempt to identify the main gaps and to propose viable solutions. The obtained results are based on multifactorial analysis at local level, by personal processing of relevant data, the evolving activity collected from a county pension facility that meets the characteristics of the retirement pension system nationwide.

Keywords: public pension system; employment; social security; social security budget, pension reform

Jel Classification: G23; J68

Part I

1. General Considerations on the Public Pension System in Romania at Global Level

The public pension system is of paramount importance for any society, particularly through the impact that has on people's lives and on the economic environment by the great number of people involved (contributors and beneficiaries), by the size of expenditures. The public pension system has an important part of the budget expenditures around the world where there is still active. The world population has aged, the active population is declining, the unemployment rate has increased dramatically worldwide in the context of financial economic crisis and its effects are found in massive retirements as the "solution" to the crisis. Worldwide, 212 million registered to be unemployed in 2010, with 34 million more than in 2009.¹ The share of population aged over 65 years (possible beneficiary of the state pension system) increased from 11% in 1990 to 15% in 2009. On the other hand, the share of population aged under 14 years (the population which in the coming decades will contribute to the pension system), decreased from 24% in 1990 to only 15% in 2009.²

The Romanian pension system has come a long way from the first forms of sickness and old age insurance that exists since the 1800s, the directions being set by legislation passed in various stages of evolution of the society. Since 1990 there is a legislative ferment in this area in the excess of giving people rights that they did not have before. The consequences have resulted in the continuous increase in the number of persons included in the public pension system, simultaneously increased other socially assisted categories and the situation has worsened, being sustained by internal factors and financial and economic developments worldwide.

But the reform was delayed until 1 April 2001, the date on which entered into force Law no. 19/2000. The law introduces a series of positive news in the Romanian social, but also other things that have led to the increase of number of pensioners and thus public spending, where it can be highlighted the introduction of new categories of pension, in addition to the classical ones, and established the early retirement and partial early retirement, which can be requested and granted up to five years before reaching normal retirement age, as provided by law (Table 1).

¹ http://www.euractiv.ro/uniunea-europeana

² http://www.wall-street.ro

Type of benefit	Coverage Source
Pension	
- Old-age pension	
- Early retirement	Entirely from the state social insurance budget
- Partial early retirement	
- Disability pension	
- Survivor's pension	
Other social security rights	
- Allowance for temporary incapacity for work caused by common illnesses or accidents outside work, occupational diseases and accidents at work	Co-financing from the state social insurance budget and employer.
 Benefits for illness prevention and recovery work capacity Maternity allowance Allowance for child care or care for sick children Death grant 	Entirely from the state social insurance budget

Table 1. Social insurance rights under the law that reformed the public pension system in Romania

Source: Law 19/2000 on the date it was adopted

Another novelty in this respect focuses on providing potential contribution period of disability pensioners, calculated as the difference between complete period of contribution and the period covered by the concerned person until disability, and this is actually a credit of the invalid, given by the system until the period that he would have achieved, if he had not been ill. Besides the parameters already familiar from the old legislation (the level of contributions, retirement ages, periods of contribution), the new pension formula¹ reveals a new defining parameter, the point of retirement. The value of it is determined by the state social insurance budget law, but the way to fundament it has undergone many changes, which indicates an inconsistency in the implementation, having an effect upon parametric reform impact of the public system on the state social insurance.

The parametric reform was completed, with great delay, with a structural reform of public pension system by introducing mandatorily the privately managed pension. This system, called Pillar II, which became operational in 2008, has some special features: the amount paid from the contribution rate is accumulated in individual accounts and capitalizes on the financial market; the supervising attributions of private pension funds are delegated to the Commission for the Supervision of Private Pension System, under the control of the Romanian Parliament; the State delegates the private sector with management tasks of this pillar, but retain the regulatory functions.

Another step in the structural reform of the pension system was the introduction of the pillar III, voluntary private pension system, which became operational since May 2007, an optional pension designed for the contributions of those who adhere to the fund.

The public pension system in Romania currently works on the principle of distribution / compensation between generations ("pay as you go") is governed by Law no. 19/2000, with numerous amendments and completions. The number of pensioners rises according to the records from August 2010, at 5,497,800 of people, of which 4,770,813 have state pension insurance.² The total of employees in Romania is estimated to be about 4 million, in a country of a little over 21 million inhabitants, out of which 10.2 million adults and 5 million youth and children, 6 million elders over 50 years.

Budget deficit for 2010 state pensions could reach 3% of GDP, with chances of increasing in time, given the existing demographic, social, economic non-correlation at national and global level.

 $^{^{1}}$ It consists of adding the annual points resulted from reporting the wages for each year to the average wage income from that year – it is taken into account the entire contribution period; the sum of the annual points is divided to the complete period of contribution.

² http://www.cnpas.org

2. The Analysis of the Public Pension System Based on Indicators - a Case Study Braila County Pension Facility

The Braila County is part of the economic development region of the South-Eastern Romania, with a population representing about 13% of the total population. According to the existing data in 2005, the active population (of age) in the Southeast Region was 43.7% - 45.5%, but it was slightly below the national average - and the region's employed population was 36.1%, in Braila was 34%, also below the national average, 38.8%.¹

These features of the south-east area, as well as the evolution in the local economy are reflected in the values changes of some indicators of the public pension system in the Braila County.

2.1. The Analysis of the Number of Policyholders, in Developments and Correlations having Impact on the Public Pension System

The evolution of the number of employees rated from the statements presented by employers, as the evolution of the number of policyholders of the contribution by the state social insurance budget is not favourable between the years 2001 - 2010 (Table 2). In the period 2001-2005 it can be observed a continuous increase of the number of employees receiving benefits from the public system, while it is decreasing the number of active employees, which may lead to the assumption, in fact largely confirmed later, that the temporary incapacity to work was a "refuge" of those who have received notice to postpone the entry into unemployment. In the same period it is observed, an overall increase of the beneficiaries in the case of optional insurance policy, insurance contract, along with an increase in the number of policyholders in this category. One explanation is the fact that many people ensured for the purpose of receiving some benefits from the public system, especially parental leave for childcare for up to two years. An insurance of at least six months before the birth was sufficient to obtain the right to paid leave for two years. Since 2006, for temporary disability leave are not paid from the public funds, so for these periods it should be granted the state social insurance contribution at the level of the minimum wage. Therefore, in 2006, they pass among the contributors to the public system, but with a limited basis for calculating the contribution to the value of the minimum wage. Also, policyholders do not

¹ Site-ul OIR POSDRU SUD-EST, http://www.fsesudest.ro/Prez-Reg-SE.pdf

benefit from this contract, and the parental leave children for childcare for up to two years are no longer paid by state social insurance budget, so that persons identified in this category are no longer part of the beneficiaries of the public system.

Indicator	Years										
Indicator	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	
1. Annual average number of nominal employees that make the statements, including:	99280	94936	89242	82284	78439	76339	75698	75888	72265	69959	
2. Annual average number of employees insured beneficiaries of pension benefits payable	2838	3386	3700	4004	4295	-	-	-	-	-	
3. Average number of unemployed to be paid CAS	11770	9312	5466	6111	3607	2966	1842	1335	3947	6917	
4. Average number of employees are laid off	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	443	485	
5. Average number of employees for which is due the state social insurance contribution	84672	82238	80076	72169	70537	73373	73856	74553	67875	62557	
6. Average number of insured individual insurance statement, of which	1298	1399	1502	1454	1444	1365	1395	1461	1490	1532	
7. Average number of insured individual insurance statement of paid benefits from the pension system	27	30	34	45	59	-	-	-	-	-	
8. Average number of insured individual with insurance contract	74	303	419	583	932	1076	1542	2365	3221	3865	

Table 2. The Evolution of the number of policyholders who were registered in CJF
Braila during 2001 – 2010 (persons)

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	-	-		-		-	-		-	
9. Average number of insured individual with insurance contract, beneficiaries of paid services from the pension system	1	26	94	87	153	-	-	-	-	-
10. Average number of insured beneficiaries of paid services from the pension system	2866	3442	3828	4136	4507	-	-	-	-	-
11. Average number of policyholders who owes the state social insurance contribution (1+6+8-4-10)	97786	93196	87335	80185	76308	78780	78635	79714	76533	74871
12. Average annual number of employers rated from the statements	3280	3364	3826	4512	4918	5050	5447	5828	5733	5374

Table 3. Evolution of registration with the Trade Register

Indicator					Ye	ars				
Indicator	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010*
Number of existing registration in the Register of Trade	12434	13690	15571	17623	20115	21616	23250	25305	27238	27482
from the PF and AF	1177	1810	2739	3652	4931	5387	5850	6699	7872	8032
Number radiation, liquidation, dissolution existing in the Trade Register	3013	4992	5203	3512	1461	3183	3855	4506	5733	5906

Source: National Trade Register Office Statistics *) for 2010, data from February

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Indicator	Years											
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010		
The county's population, of which:	385066	375898	374318	371749	370428	367661	365628	363979	360191			
-0-14 years	64554	60709	57757	54913	52304	51469	50516	:	:	:		
-15-59 years	242368	236733	238239	239002	240372	238589	237619	:	:	:		
-60 years and over	78144	78456	78322	77834	77752	77603	77493	:	:	:		
Employed civilian of the County	129700	127700	124200	121800	126100	127900	132200	÷	:	••		
The average number of unemployed	20600	19067	11794	11993	9480	7914	5984	5351	8649	12173		
The number of insured active people in the evidence of CJP Braila	109753	102850	94409	88833	82832	80454	78899	77929	78043	81854		

Table 4. Braila county's working population between 2001 - 2010	(persons)
Tuble in Drand county 5 working population between 2001 2010	(persons)

Source: Regional Statistics Braila, CEA Braila 2010 data are from the month of April, "" signifies lack of data

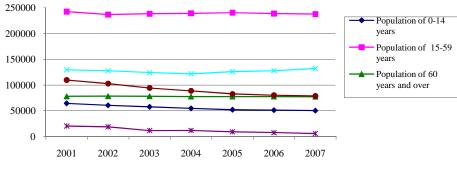


Figure 1. The evolution of the population of Brăila County

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Indicator	Ani									
Indicator	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010*
Average number of statements of policyholders under the age of 35 years including	47901	45285	38750	33929	31055	27789	26608	25646	23492	21553
Average number of statements of policyholders aged between 35 and 45 years inclusive	25934	23426	23585	22554	22068	22054	21920	22206	21893	22119
Average number of statements of policyholders aged between 45 and 60 years inclusive	24354	25196	25739	24588	24048	25153	25657	26313	25219	24671
Average number of statements of policyholders aged over 60 years	1091	1028	1169	1213	1267	1344	1513	1723	1661	1616
Average number of insured persons with insurance declaration under the age of 35 years including	326	358	382	348	340	273	265	286	293	273
Average number of insured persons with insurance declaration aged between 35 and 45 years inclusive	466	447	473	465	454	435	461	477	496	541
Average number of	496	581	638	635	643	647	652	678	677	689

Table 5. The situation on the average number of policyholders in relation to the ages of policyholders who were registered in CJP Braila (persons)

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-										0
insured										
persons with										
insurance										
declaration										
aged between										
45 and 60										
years										
inclusive										
-										
Average										
number of										
insured										
persons with										
insurance	10	13	9	6	7	10	17	20	24	29
contract under										
the age of 35										
years										
including										
Average	1	1		1	1		1	1		
number of										
policyholders										
with the	23	157	190	233	399	354	479	698	893	965
	23	157	190	235	399	554	4/9	098	095	905
statement of										
assurance										
over 60 years										
Average										
number of										
policyholders										
with the										
insurance	17	50	00	150	075	272	504	0.20	1120	1207
contract	17	53	98	152	275	373	524	828	1136	1397
between the										
ages of 35 and										
45 years										
including										
Average										
number of										
policyholders										
with the										
insurance	32	88	124	193	252	344	535	824	1152	1422
contract		00				5	000	02.		
between the										
ages of 45 and										
60 years										
inclusive										
Average										
number of										
insured										
persons with										
insurance	2	5	7	5	5	6	4	14	39	80
contract over										
60 years of										
age										

Source: Statistical data C.J.P. Braila's own data processing

 \ast For 2010, the average was done on the first four months of the year.

Analyzing the number of insured employees, it has been steadily decreasing, even if the active population, in its structure, increased slightly in 2006, 2007; during these years there has been registered at national level the highest growth since 2001, and the number of unemployed decreased (Table 4 and Figure 1). This may be the result of the orientation of active people to freelance work as physical entity or in family associations, without respecting the obligation of being ensured, to the unpaid work in households or to "illegal" work.

In table 5 we observe that the decrease in the number of insured employees occurred due to the massive lowering of employees under the age of 35 years. There is a slight decrease of workers aged between 35 and 45 and slight increases among employees aged over 45 years. The same tendencies, in terms of age groups, are maintained in the cases for the insured with declaration. Only in cases where the contract of insurance policyholders may be observed increases in all age groups. This may be due to the fact that many people approaching retirement age complete their necessary period for registration to a pension.

The number of insured persons with insurance statement has not registered variations in the analyzed period. Comparing with the existing registration data from the Trade Register (Table 3), note that, except for the years 2001 and 2002, the number of insured persons with insurance declaration remains far behind the number of registrations from individuals and family associations at the Trade Register, which are the main possible individual policyholders according to the law.

As regards the taxation base, in the county, we see that, in the case of employees, between average income and gross average salary is in ascending during the analysed period (table 7 and figure 2). The assured income of individual policyholders, on average, slightly exceeded by one third of the gross average salary used to substantiate the state social insurance budget. Corroborating on this modest tax base, the ratio of the number of employees and beneficiaries of state social insurance budget, locally, which had a downward tendency during the analysed period (table 11), explains the evolution of the local budgetary execution as presented in table 14 and figure 5.

The degree of coverage of state social insurance system in the Braila County, obtained by comparing the average annual number of policyholders who were registered C.J.P. Braila, at the level of average number of persons employed at the county level, within the available data (table 6), decreased continuously from 2001

to 2007 and, given the national decline of employment, it lowered the average number of insured persons; this downward tendency continued until 2010.

Indicator		Years										
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010		
Average number of policyholders under the surveillance (people)	100652	96638	91163	84321	80815	78780	78635	79714	76533	74871		
Employed civilian population of the county (persons)	129700	127700	124200	121800	126100	127900	132200	:	:	:		
Coverage (%)	77,6	75,7	73,4	69,2	64,0	61,6	59,5	:	:	:		

Table 6. Coverage of state social insurance system in the Braila County

Source: Regional Statistics Braila, C.J.P. Braila own calculations, " " signifies lack of data

 Table 7. The evolution of the average annual income of the insured people in the

 evidence provided C.J.P. Braila, compared to gross average expected by the state

 social insurance budget law

									-	RON
Indicator					Ye	ars				
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Average insured annual income of employees from nominal statements	304	372	482	501	590	743	914	1177	1257	1245
Average insured income of employees with insurance declaration	153	196	248	281	342	387	464	553	611	585
Average insured income of employees with the insurance contract	156	343	286	227	263	293	342	374	383	374
Gross average wage	415	558	696	768	921	1077	1270	1550	1693	1836

Source: CJP's own statistical data Braila

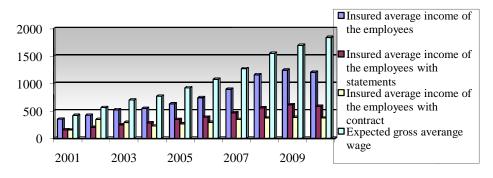


Figure 2. The evolution of insured average income of policyholders within the C.J.P. Brăila

2.2. Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis of Major Beneficiaries of State Social Insurance Budget

The main beneficiaries of state social security budget are the pensioners (table 10 and figure 4). In the past 10 years, the number of state social insurance pensioners increased by 6295. Of this growth on the entire period, 2890 represents the increase of the number of recipients of disability pensions, standing out here the existing tendency at national level. This is explained by the "refugee" found in the disability retirement by those who no longer find a place in the labour market in most cases; this is basically an early retirement. The number of pensioners of early retirement increased seven times in 2001 - 2010, and those with partial early retirement pension by 5.4 times, amounting 2058 people. Thus, approximately 79% of the total increase in the number of pensioners is the early retirement under one form or another. After analyzing the data we observed the influence of the economic environment, whereas in the most prolific years, 2007, 2008, in terms of economic, national and regional levels, the number of pensioners encounters a slight decrease, from the retired senior categories of incomplete or early retirement. As an influence of the economic area where it is assigned the Braila County, we found that the average pension at the level of the county is less than the one at the level of the country (tables 8, 9 and figure 3).

Comparing the average number of policyholders that owe the contribution of social insurance to the number of beneficiaries of the system, we observe an overall worsening of its values, which, in addition to modest tax base, is a weakness in terms of local system-level sustainability (table 11). The report also improved considerably in 2005, when former pensions from social insurance system of the farmers have entered in the budget of the state.

The analysis of the average retirement age, both men and women (tables 12, 13), note that since 2001 the retirement age, overall, has not significantly increased for men, but it increased by approximately 2 years for women. This can be explained in particular by the facilities offered to the retiring persons that have not been placed in the upper working groups, which maintained at a low level even the retirement limit age and the period for full retirement. Overall retirement age has been maintained at a low level and largely because of the anticipated retirements. This situation is not unique to Braila County, but at national level as well, it is observed a much slower growth of the retirement age than expected. At this indicator we noticed a recovery, meaning a more significant increase in retirement age in the years 2007, 2008, but in 2009 it has decreased again for women.

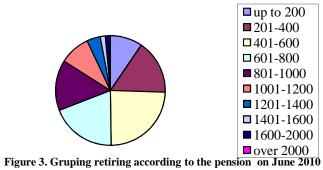
 Table 8. The evolution of average score and the average pension for pensioners who are paying, whose duties shall be paid from state social insurance budget, according to the existing evidence CJP Braila during 2001 - 2010

Indicator		Years											
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010			
Average score	0,71020	0,7162623	0,75340	0,80905	0,84468	0,86237	0,89218	0,93065	0,94850	0,95950			
The average pension Braila (lei)	129	158	180	223	256	296	380	566	678	700			
The average pension in the country (lei)	131	163	187	232	267	311	399	593	711	:			

Source: CNPAS C.J.P. Statistics Braila's own data processing

Table 9. Insurance Group State pensioners who were registered CJP Braila in the
amount of the pension payment after June 2010

Indicator	Tranches indicator value of pension (lei)										
	Up to 200	201- 400	401- 600	601- 800	801- 1000	1001- 1200	1201- 1400	1401- 1600	1600- 2000	Over 2000	
No. of individuals	8114	13636	20669	16462	12693	7691	3405	1270	920	350	



Source: Statistics C.J.P. Braila's own data processing

Table 10 The evolution of the number of pensioners in payment, whose duties shall be paid from state social insurance budget, according to the existing evidence CJP Braila during 2001 -2010 (persons)

Indicator					Ye	ars				
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
1. The total number of pensioners of state social insurance, including	76028	77224	78388	79071	79534	80078	79689	79548	80193	82323
2. The old- age pensioners with a full length of service	39039	39246	40046	40952	41545	42296	43187	44220	45575	47368
3. Old-age pensioners, with ain incomplete length of	15926	15309	14851	14154	13416	12555	11655	10854	10110	9919

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service										
4. Disability pensioners, of which	9896	10331	10491	10943	11591	12287	12376	12394	12543	12786
5. Degree of disability pensioners	360	353	360	368	386	405	426	452	479	491
6. Grade II disability pensioners	6748	6674	6396	6336	6492	6536	6195	5999	5943	5982
7. Grade III disability pensioners	2788	3304	3735	4239	4713	5346	5755	5943	6121	6313
8. Early retirement pensioners	21	119	180	208	206	223	181	157	152	148
9. Partial early retirement pensioners	442	1630	2085	2183	2348	2453	2219	2080	2136	2373
10. Retired with a survivor's pension	10704	10589	10735	10631	10428	10264	10071	9843	9677	9729
11. Farmers' retiring	34004	32246	30302	28553	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Statistical data C.J.P. Braila's own data processing, for 2010 the average was performed on the first four months of the year

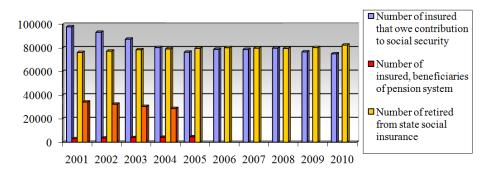


Figure 4. The evolution of the number of contributors and beneficiaries of the retirement system in the Braila County

Indicator		Years										
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010		
Number of												
taxpayers	97787	93197	88532	82068	78525	81294	81389	81181	80297	81866		
(individuals)												
Number of												
pensioners whose												
rights are paid	110032	109470	108690	107624	79534	80078	79689	79548	80193	82323		
from the state	110052	109470	108090	107624	/9554	80078	/9089	79548	80195	82323		
social insurance												
budget (persons)												
Report	0,88	0,85	0,81	0,76	0,98	1,015	1,02	1,02	1,00	0,99		
contributors:												
pensioners												

Table 11. The evolution of the contributors / pensioners' report in the period 2001 to2010 in Braila County

Source: CJP's own statistical data Braila

Table 12. The evolution of the retirement age pensioners (men), whose duties shall be paid from state social insurance budget, according to the existing evidence CJP Braila during 2001 - 2010 persons

Indicator					Ye	ars				
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
The average retirement age for old age and early retirement with full length of service	60,1	59,1	58,3	58,4	58,7	58,4	59,2	59,5	59,9	60,3
The average retirement age for old age with a full length of service	60,6	59,0	57,8	58,0	58,2	57,8	59,0	59,2	59,7	59,8
The average retirement age for early retirement	59,3	59,7	59,5	59,5	59,2	60,4	59,9	60,7	61,2	60,8
The average retirement age for partial early retirement	59,8	59,4	59,1	59,3	59,4	59,6	60,0	60,3	60,4	61,4
The average age of retirement for disability	47,6	47,8	48,5	49,7	50,0	50,6	50,9	51,8	52,3	52,2

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The average age of retirement for disability degree	46,9	47,0	44,0	46,7	49,0	49,9	51,3	49,0	51,4	50,3
The average retirement age for grade II disability	47,2	47,2	48,0	49,0	48,7	50,0	50,1	51,6	51,8	51,6
The average age of retirement for disability of grade III	48,9	48,8	49,8	51,2	52,0	52,0	52,3	52,0	53,1	53,7

Source: Statistical data C.J.P. Braila's own data processing, for 2010 the average was performed on the first four months of the year.

Table 13. The evolution of retirement age pensioners (women), whose duties shall be paid from the state social insurance budget, according to the existing evidence CJP Braila during 2001 - 2010 (persons)

Indicator		Years									
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	
The average retirement age for old age with a full length of service	55,4	56,0	56,1	56,4	56,6	56,6	57,0	57,7	57,4	57,5	
The average retirement age for early retirement	57,2	57,4	57,3	57,4	57,7	57,4	57,5	58,4	58,3	58,1	
The average retirement age for partial early retirement	54,5	55,0	55,6	55,6	55,7	55,8	56,5	57,0	56,0	57,0	
The average age of retirement for disability	54,8	54,5	54,4	54,6	54,6	55,0	55,2	55,6	55,7	56,5	
The average age of retirement for disability degree	46,2	47,4	47,9	47,8	48,9	49,1	49,0	50,4	50,0	49,3	
The average retirement age for grade II disability	51,0	48,4	47,5	52,2	47,6	50,9	50,3	47,8	50,1	40,0	
The average age of retirement for disability of grade III	45,8	46,8	47,4	46,8	48,1	48,0	47,8	49,9	49,4	48,4	
The average retirement age for old age with a full length of service	46,7	48,4	48,4	48,7	48,7	49,9	50,3	51,0	50,8	50,6	

Source: Statistical data C.J.P. Braila's own data processing, for 2010 the average was performed on the first four months of the year.

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