

The aim is to compare the health status and overall level of health care between the Czech Republic and Israel, and to compare both countries to a standard reference group in the form of the EU-15. To this end, we present and compare demographic indices, life expectancy, age standardized death rates (SDR) by categories, infant mortality rates, burden of disease, hospital discharges, lifestyle factors (smoking, alcohol consumption and overweight), hospital beds, health care personnel and utilization, and finally, health expenditure. The data is organized in tables and time trend graphs. Values are compared and time trends are elaborated. When relevant, the data is presented for the two genders separately.

The major findings of this work are: demographically, the population structure of the two countries differs; Israel has a younger population with a high fertility rate while the Czech population is older with a low fertility rate. Life expectancy, while improving, is still 4 years lower in the Czech Republic than in Israel. Further, population standardized death rate (SDR) from all causes is more than 45% higher in the Czech Republic. This constitutes a 17 year lag of the Czech Republic behind Israel in life expectancy and SDR. The excess mortality in the Czech Republic compared to Israel and the EU-15 is concentrated mainly in cardiovascular diseases and cancers. External causes of death and diseases of the digestive system also contribute to the excess mortality, but less profoundly.

I also found that the Czech Republic has higher alcohol consumption, higher smoking prevalence among young people, a lower long-term health care hospital and bed rate, a lower nursing and elderly home bed rate, consequent lower average length of stay in long-term hospitals, and lower expenditure on health, all of which adversely influence health status and health care, and help account for the 17 year lag of the Czech Republic in life expectancy and SDR.

Most Israeli health indices equal that of the EU-15 and are improving in time. While the Czech Republic indices are less favorable than those of Israel they exhibit a faster improving trend that started in the early 1990s.