

## Suicides of people over 60 years old in Primorsko-goranska County in the period from 2012 to 2021

### Samoubojstva osoba starijih od 60 godina u Primorsko-goranskoj županiji u razdoblju od 2012. do 2021. godine

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**Introduction and aim:** Suicides of the elderly are a neglected cause of death and are rarely researched. The aim of this paper is to present data on suicides of people over 60 years of age in Primorsko-goranska County, in a ten-year period (2012-2021); the number of suicides by gender, the methods of committing suicide and the gravity of the persons. The purpose of the work is to point out the specific public health problems of people over 60 years old in order to improve the quality of life of this population.

**Methods:** The data of the mortality statistics were used, which includes all deceased persons who had a place of residence in Primorsko-goranska County. We divided the people who committed suicide according to gravity into four subregions: the City of Rijeka, the islands, Gorski kotar and the coast.

**Results:** In the observed period, 188 people over the age of 60 committed suicide, of which 139 (74%) were men and 49 (26%) were women. According to gravity, the number of suicides by subregion is as follows: 73 (38.8%) are from the City of Rijeka, 67 (35.6%) from the coast, 26 (13.8%) from the island, 22 (11.7%) from Gorski kotar. The three leading methods of committing suicide in the observed period among men were: hanging (a total of 86 or 62% of the total suicides), jumping from a height (13 or 9.3%) and a shot from a pistol (9 or 22.3%). The three leading ways of committing suicide among women in the observed period were: hanging (a total of 18 or 36.7% of the total suicides), poisoning with sedatives (8 or 16.3%) and in third place with the same share, drowning and jumping from a height (6 or 12.2%).

**Conclusion:** The share of people over 60 who committed suicide, in relation to the total number of suicides in the Primorsko-goranska County, is significant, so it is necessary to conduct more detailed research which would improve gerontological health care. The distribution by gender is significantly in favor of men (74:26%), so we can conclude that men are at greater risk. The most common method of committing suicide is hanging in both sexes. Unlike men, women hardly use firearms, while women use sedative poisoning much more often than men, from which we can conclude that the availability of a means of committing suicide plays a role in its implementation. The causes of high suicide rates among the elderly require more detailed sociological research, the conclusions of which would represent a platform for proposing and implementing preventive measures.