

EDITORIAL EJAFB
THE IMPACT OF RESTRICTING ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE ON ECONOMIC GROWTH**PhD Professor Veronica GROSU**

Romania is currently facing two major crises - limited access to essential medical tests for patients with chronic conditions and a difficult economic situation in the country. Though these two problems may appear to be separate from one another, they do have a relationship with each other in relation to the citizens of the nation and the management of the government.

One of the main issues within Romania is within its healthcare sector. Private healthcare providers in Romania are experiencing significant declines in the number of patients who require and complete essential medical tests for their chronic conditions. For instance, there are reports of declines in essential tests of as high as 67% for certain conditions in Romania. Additionally, these patients are required to wait for several months to receive tests like MRIs. Such a situation is unacceptable for 2026.

The impact of these missing medical tests will have negative effects on Romania's healthcare system. For one, more individuals will be forced to go into the hospital for their conditions, which is already strained. Additionally, Romania allocates nearly half of its healthcare budget to hospitals, while the European recommendations for healthcare budgets for the region allocate budgets towards preventive and primary care for patients.

Romania's economy is also in significant decline. The country is experiencing a declining competitiveness in its economic factor. Also, more than 20,000 companies went out of business in the first quarter of the current year. Furthermore, the industrial production within the country is declining, as well as the consumption of the citizens of the nation. Additionally, the nation's external debt has gone beyond the threshold of 1,000 billion lei.

The link between the health and the economy of Romania is significant. Romania requires a healthy population to be productive members of the economy. However, its inefficient healthcare system prevents individuals from contributing to the economy of the nation. Ensuring that individuals can access essential medical tests will promote better health and allow for the prevention of medical issues. Additionally, rethinking the allocations of the healthcare budget for the country will allow Romania to better treat its citizens. Citizens' well-being must remain at the center of public policy, and concrete solutions can no longer be delayed.

Romanians have the right to health, a decent standard of living, and responsible governance that puts people first.