

# NOT JUST ONE MOMENT IN TIME: WORLDWIDE TRENDS IN DEMENTIA PREVALENCE

Ilaria Cova, Anna Markova, Isabella Campini, Giulia Grande, Claudio Mariani, Simone Pomati

Center for Research and Treatment on Cognitive Dysfunctions, Department of Clinical Sciences, ASST Fatebenefratelli Sacco, Luigi Sacco University Hospital

## Introduction

Dementia is one of the major challenges of this century due to the great burden not only on caregivers, but also on society: the number of people affected by dementia worldwide is expected to more than triple by 2050 in the wake of world population aging.

## Objective:

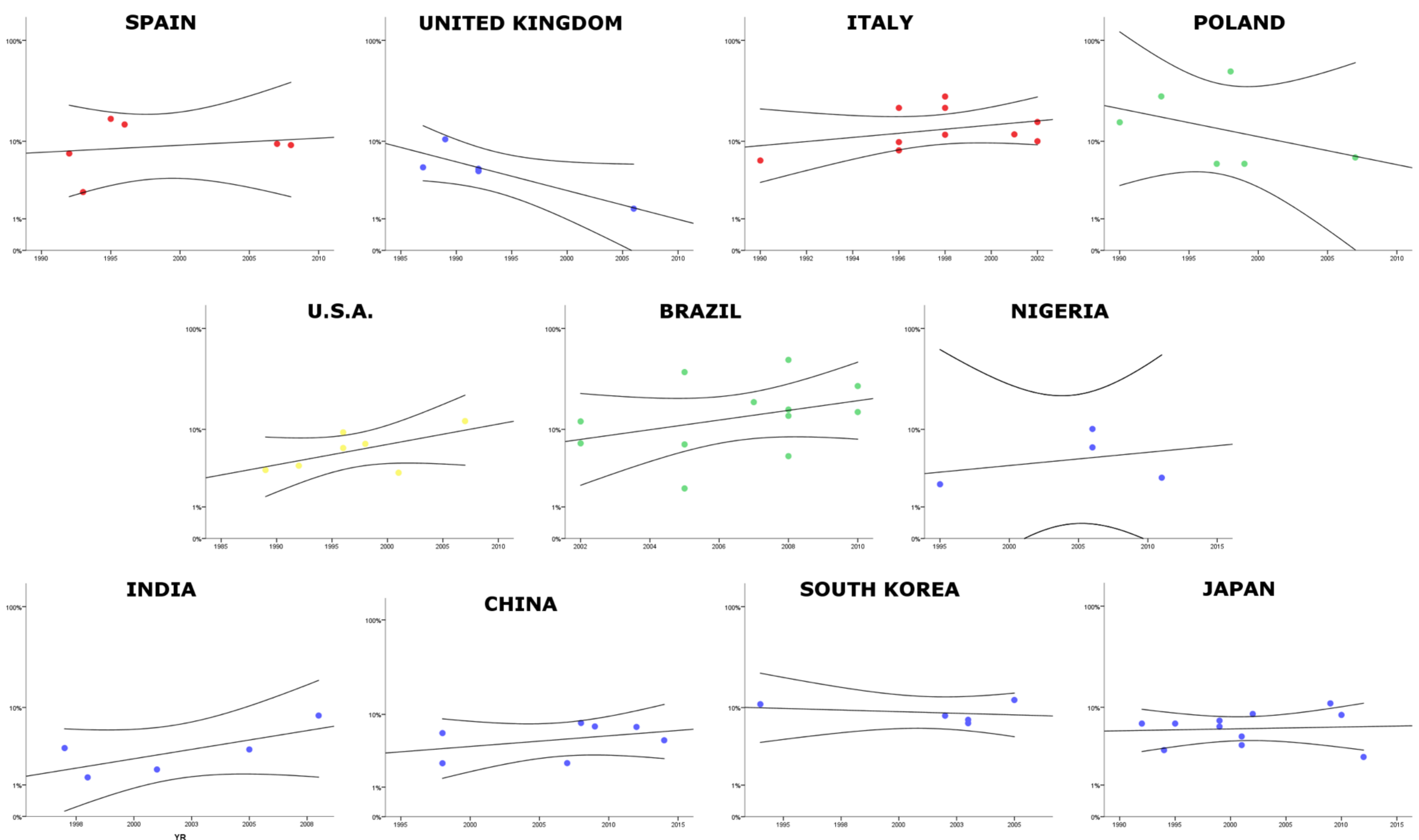
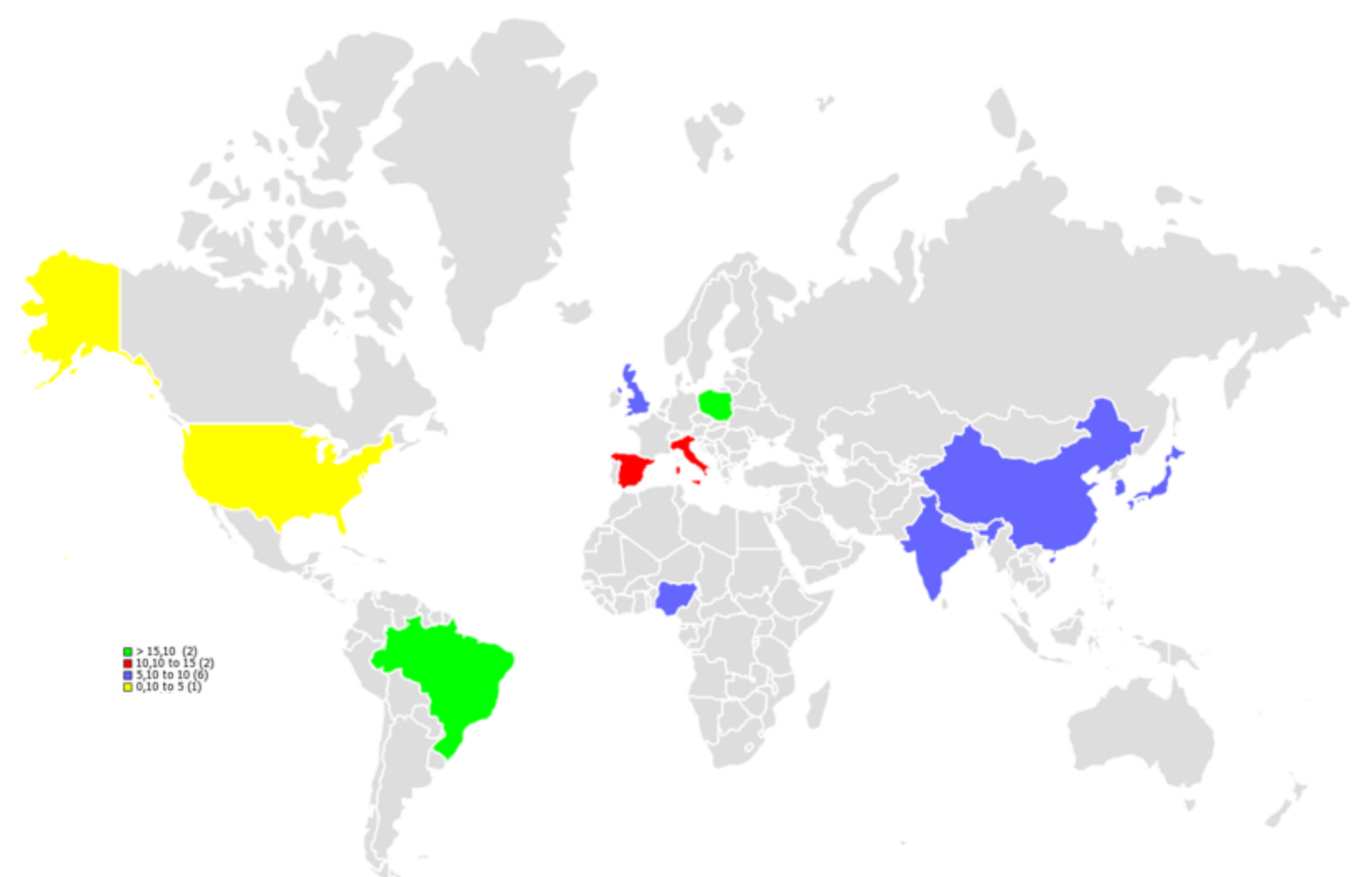
The aim of our research was to highlight the trends in dementia prevalence worldwide in the last 50 years, moving beyond the point prevalence illustrated in distinct researches or in selected regional summaries

## Methods:

We performed a systematic review of the literature through PubMed (MeSH: dementia AND epidemiology OR prevalence) and identified 123 relevant articles published between 1965 and 2015.

## Results:

The overall mean prevalence (%) was  $9.33 \pm 8.21$ , median 7.2, IQR 4.6 – 10.9. The analysis of the global trend (linear regression model), with all available data, showed no significant increase in dementia prevalence in the time window explored (1978 – 2015):  $R\text{-squared} = .004$ ,  $F = .455$ ,  $t = .675$ ,  $p = .501$ . We also performed trends analyses for those countries where at least four different reports were available: Brazil, China, India, Italy, Japan, Korea, Nigeria, Poland, Spain, UK, USA. For all such countries, prevalence did not appear to increase over time, except, mildly, for India ( $R\text{-squared} = .686$ ,  $F = 8.725$ ,  $t = 2.954$ ,  $p = 0.042$ ).



## Discussion:

This preliminary report, focusing on global prevalence for people older than 60 years, showed non-significant changes in overall dementia occurrence. Future research is needed to explore the trends for selected age groups, since age is the strongest known risk factor for dementia. Although prevalence of subjects affected by dementia remains stable, aging of the world population will result in a consistent increase of dementia cases, requiring long-term worldwide strategies (such as encouraging primary, but also secondary and tertiary prevention) and posing a great challenge particularly for countries with scarce resources.