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Original article

## PROFILE OF THE RUNNER OF THE STREET RUNNING COMPETITIONS

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### Abstract

*Problem statement.* Ever since ancient times, running sports races have been of real interest for both adults and children and have had a considerable impact on the population.

Over the decades, the evolution of mass sports events has made significant steps forward, with currently more than 1,100 running races worldwide. The estimated number of competitors who have completed the 26.2-mile race reaches 541,000.

Bucharest Running Club (BRC) is a sports association that organizes and implements concepts related to mass sports events on the Romanian market. Races take place in full compliance with the international sports standards. The calendar of events includes three of the biggest street running competitions in Bucharest – 10K & Family Run, Bucharest Half Marathon and Bucharest Marathon. All Bucharest Running Club competitions are certified and listed in the AIMS and IAAF international calendar.

This research aims to establish the profile of the runner taking part in the races organized by the Bucharest Running Club. The study performed in this regard included two stages, a qualitative one and a quantitative one. The research was conducted on 595 active participants in these running sports events.

The research methods used were the questionnaire survey and the interview.

*Conclusions.* From the analysis carried out, we can conclude that the average age of participants is 35 years, and 67% of runners are men. Also, in terms of the socio-demographic profile, the BRC runner has post-graduate or graduate studies (92%) and a monthly income between 2000 and 4999 lei (49%) or over 5000 lei (42%).

*Keywords:* marathon, sports events, runner.

### Introduction

Running, one of the basic motor skills, is, along with walking, the main form of human locomotion, which is present in all types of activities. Running has the same characteristics as walking and is indispensable for solving specific life situations. (Grigore, 2003)

Running, in terms of style and way of performing it, is in full development, although essentially is one of the most natural movements. Nowadays, we are witnessing more and more running competitions dedicated to both children and adults.

Participation in street running sports events is a global social phenomenon that millions of competitors "consume" with pleasure and which also brings immense benefits (Bota, 2007).

In Romania, there are currently organized more than 120 street running events for both performance and amateur

athletes. <https://sportsplanner.com/evenimente/Alergare/localizare:Romania/>

### The Aim of the Research

This research aims to establish the profile of the runner taking part in the races organized by the Bucharest Running Club (BRC).

The study performed in this regard included two stages, a qualitative one and a quantitative one.

### Research Methods

The research methods used were:

- Investigation and data collection methods: the questionnaire survey and the interview.
- Statistical methods for processing and interpreting the data obtained.

The content of questions and the response patterns are directly shown together with the presentation and analysis of the results.

The results were analyzed using the

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mathematical and statistical method. The data were provided by the Bucharest Running Club Association.

## Results

The directions followed in the profile analysis are shown below, along with the presentation of the statistical analysis.

### Demographic data

The research was conducted on 595 active participants in the running sports events organized by the Bucharest Running Club – 10K & Family Run, Bucharest Half Marathon and Bucharest Marathon.

The demographic data were used to get a clearer picture of the group of subjects in terms of both age and gender.

Subsequently, gender analysis will reveal whether there are differences between the views of the female gender and male gender.

#### • Distribution by age group

Respondents are aged 18 to 51 years (Figure 1), with an average age of 35 years.

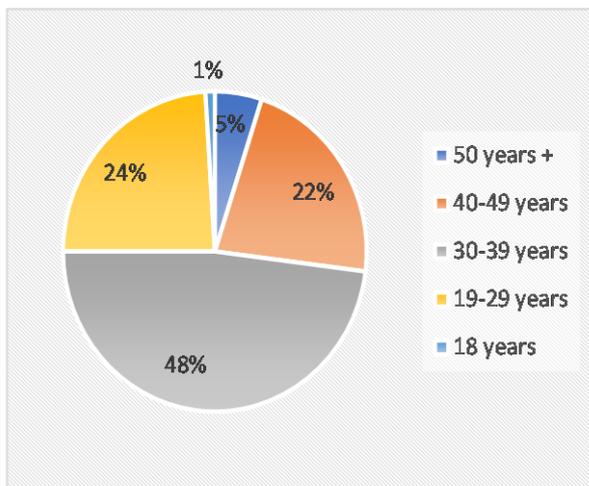


Figure 1. Distribution by age group

#### • Gender distribution

Most respondents are male, namely 67% of the sample (Figure 2).

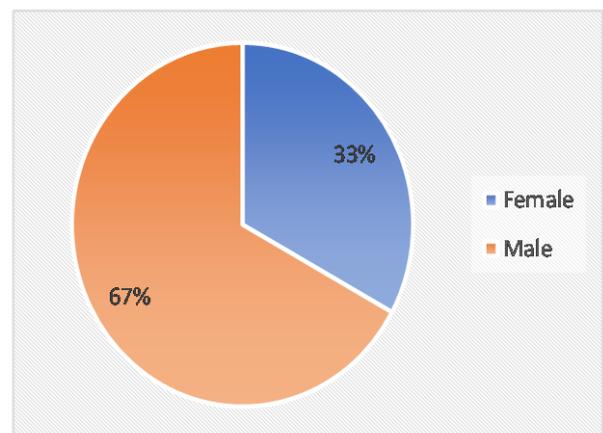


Figure 2. Gender distribution

#### • Gender distribution by age group

Participants in street running sports events are predominantly male, and this is also true for each age group. As shown in Figure 3, over 50% of participants per age group are male.

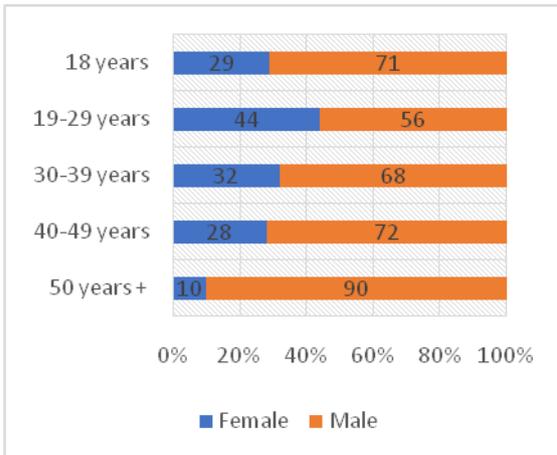


Figure 3. Gender distribution by age group

- **Distribution by area of origin**

The study carried out highlights that most respondents (87%) are from the Bucharest -Ilfov County area, which is close to the venue where the events organized by the Bucharest Running Club are held. The distribution by area of origin is shown in Figure 4.

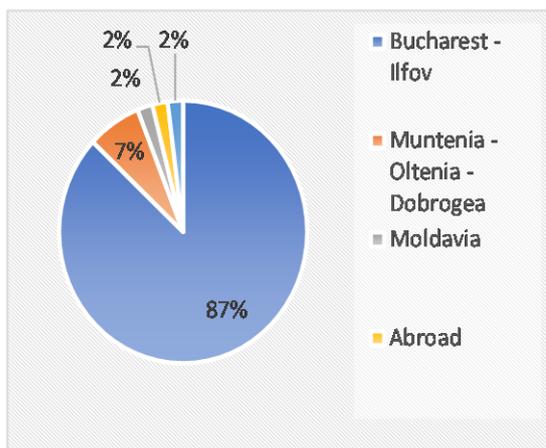
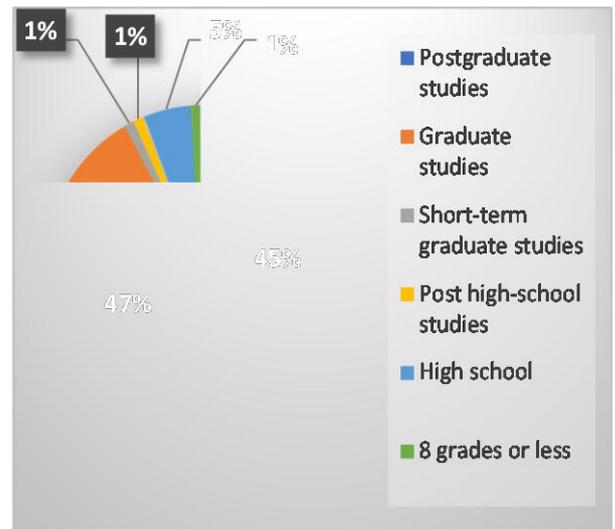


Figure 4. Distribution by area of origin

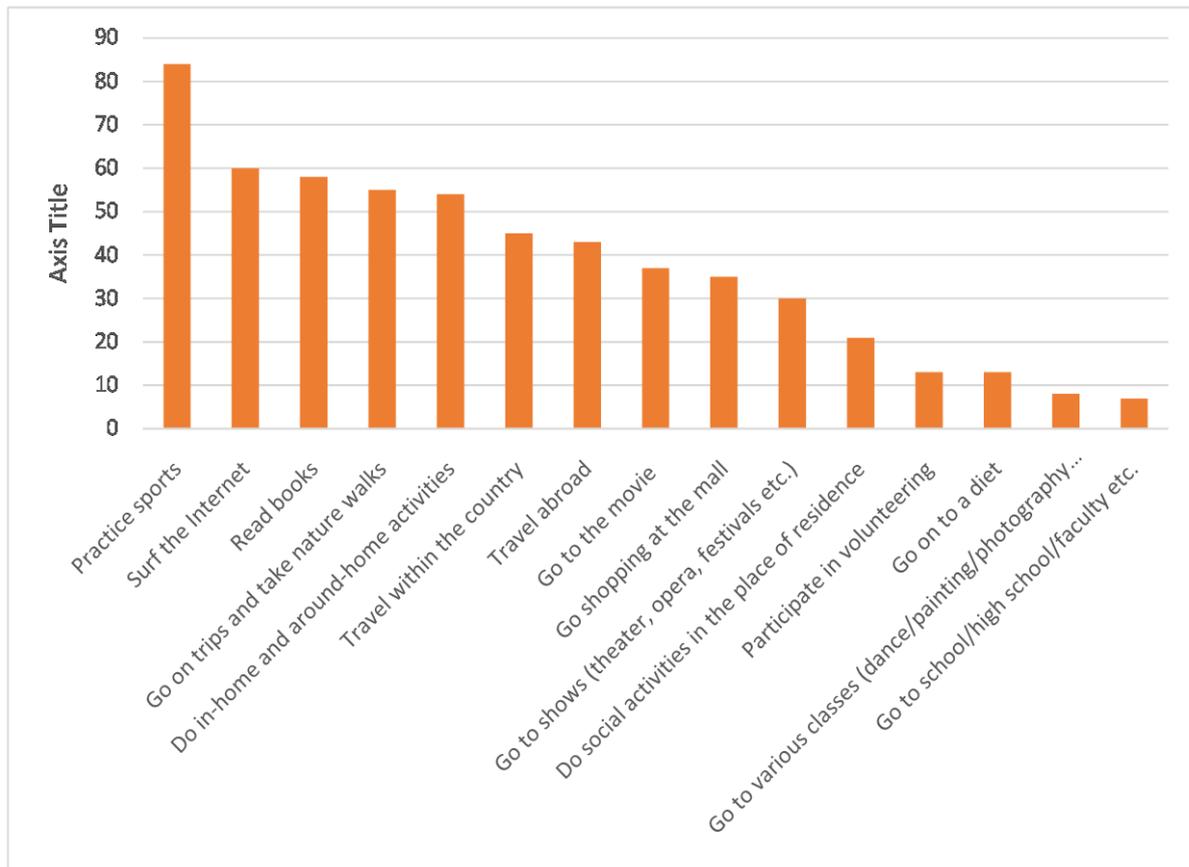


- **Distribution by level of education**

In terms of the socio-demographic profile, the runner participating in BRC competitions has graduate or postgraduate studies (92%) and a monthly income between 2000 and 4999 lei (49%) or over 5000 lei (42%) (Figure 5). This finding reinforces the idea that the urban runner in Romania has an above-average income and good education.

Figure 5. Distribution by level of education

Figure 6. Most practiced free-time activities



#### 4.2. The lifestyle of respondents

- **Which of the following activities do you practice most often in your free time?**

Analyzing the responses to this question, it is found that 84 subjects practice different motor activities.

10% of respondents say they go on trips and take nature walks (Figure 6), the hierarchy of activities placing the internet (11.0%), reading (11%) and traveling (16%) on the first places.

- **What sports do you practice on a regular basis?**

Running (89 respondents) and cycling (36 respondents) are the preferred sports, followed by fitness, swimming or trekking. Football is a rather limited hobby.

- **How many times a week have you practiced sports in the last 6 months?**

The study reveals that about 87% of respondents practice sports at least 2 times a week or more (Figure 7).

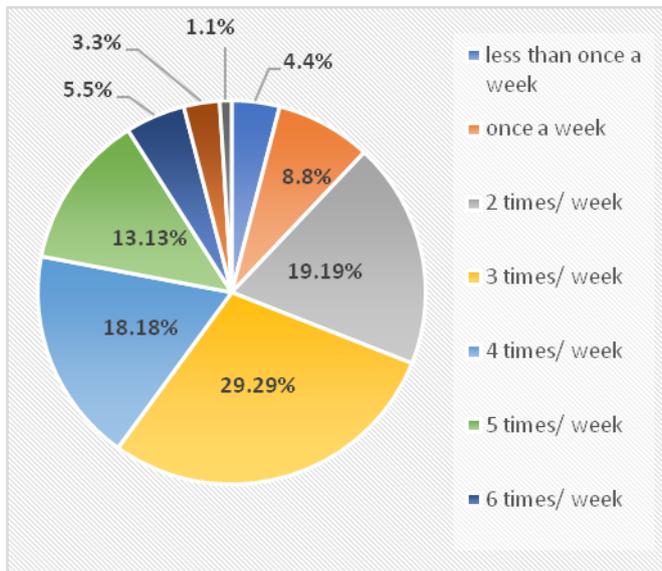


Figure 7. Frequency of practicing sports

- **What means of transport do you use most often? (maximum 3 options)**

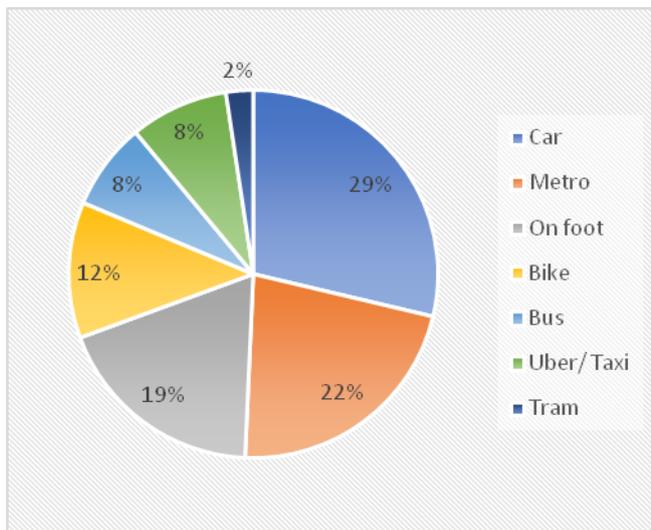


Figure 8. Means of transport used most often

As regards the running components:

- Over 50% of respondents use to time the duration of their training sessions, the most used applications being Strava (25%), Runkeeper (15%) and Runtastic (14%).
- In terms of attention paid to health, only 19% undergo medical examinations on a regular basis, 32% – often and 42% – rarely.

- On average, respondents participated in 3.5 running races in the last 12 months.
- Young people under the age of 18 participated in more than 6 races.
- On average, respondents allocated 1140 lei for running competitions in 2016 (about 250 euros per year).

### Conclusions

From the analysis carried out, we can conclude that the average age of participants is 35 years, and 67% of runners are men. In terms of the socio-demographic profile, the competitor participating in street running events has graduate or postgraduate studies (92%) and a monthly income between 2000 and 4999 lei (49%) or over 5000 lei (42%).

On the other hand, the “street runner” regularly practices sports activities, surfs the Internet, but also reads books, travels frequently or volunteers. Running and cycling are the preferred sports, followed by fitness, swimming or trekking, team sports representing a rather limited hobby.

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