

# Brazilian Academy of Neurology (2006 – 2016)

Academia Brasileira de Neurologia (2006 – 2016)

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## ABSTRACT

Brazil is a heterogeneous country with continental dimensions. The different characteristics of cultural, socioeconomic, and demographic status of the population drive different strategies for neurological care. This knowledge helps the understanding of the current scenario with the consequent possibility of preparing for future challenges. We used data from annual internal forms of the Brazilian Academy of Neurology (BAN) since 2006 and the survey for all BAN members (3,240) in 2016. The geographic distribution of BAN members in Brazil follows the demographic concentration of the population. Participation of members from big cities was the most prevalent, 18.7% of participants were young neurologists, and 36.7% of neurologists had more than of 20 years of neurological practice. The improvement of knowledge of neurological practice in Brazil will be useful for BAN leadership in planning future actions. The BAN must make an effort to aggregate a greater number of neurologists, offering updating support contributing to health policies to disseminate neurological care in Brazil.

**Keywords:** Brazilian Academy of Neurology; censuses; neurology; demographic data

## RESUMO

O Brasil é um país heterogêneo com dimensões continentais. As diferentes características culturais, do padrão socioeconômico e demográfico da população direcionam diferentes estratégias de atenção neurológica. Este conhecimento ajuda a entender o cenário atual para consequente preparação para os desafios futuros. Utilizamos informações dos relatórios anuais de Academia Brasileira de Neurologia (ABN) desde 2006, além de dados de uma pesquisa para os membros da ABN realizada em 2016. A distribuição geográfica dos membros da ABN no Brasil segue a concentração demográfica da população. A participação na pesquisa dos membros das grandes cidades foi a mais prevalente. 18,7% eram neurologistas jovens e 36,7% tinham mais de 20 anos de prática neurológica. O aperfeiçoamento do conhecimento da prática neurológica no Brasil será útil para a liderança da ABN planejar ações futuras. A ABN deve se esforçar para agregar um maior número de neurologistas, oferecendo constante atualização e apoio profissional contribuindo para políticas de saúde para disseminar o conceito de doenças neurológicas no Brasil.

**Palavras-chave:** Academia Brasileira de Neurologia; censos; neurologia; dados demográficos.

Brazil is a heterogeneous country with continental dimensions. The different characteristics of the cultural, socioeconomic, and demographic status of the population drive different strategies for primary and advanced health care, especially in neurology, which presents a big challenge<sup>1,2</sup>. The needs of Brazilian neurologists are diverse, heterogeneous, and dynamic<sup>3</sup>. The understanding of detailed neurological practice in general, and from each segment of the country, is very important. This knowledge helps the understanding of the current scenario with the consequent possibility of preparing for future challenges<sup>2,4</sup>.

The Brazilian Academy of Neurology (BAN) has been working on the common interests of neurologists in Brazil

since 1962. Each year the BAN collects information on associated members. However, these data have been published in annual forms, exclusively for BAN leadership. Traditionally, these surveys just tracked membership demographics, and characteristics, such as age, gender, subspecialty, and main location of work.

However, the details of neurological practice have not been considered. The first all-member census was designed last year, looking to complete essential information about the neurological practices of BAN members. This paper presents the collected data of the last ten years from BAN, as well as the results of the first consensus of associated neurologists.

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## METHODS

### BAN data between 2006–2016.

All graphs and tables were plotted using information (number of members, number of members per state, number of participants per congress, and percentage of representatives per region) from the annual internal forms of BAN since 2006 (Figures 1, 2, and 3).

### BAN member census (2016)

**Population** – The survey was sent by e-mail to all BAN members (3,240).

**Instruments** – The 2016 BAN census had the goal of identifying, in detail, years of practice, practice constituency, location of work, practice characteristics, practice settings, and satisfaction with different BAN actions. A questionnaire with 12 questions investigated these characteristics.

**Data collection** – The survey was sent by e-mail using the SurveyMonkey® platform in February 2016.

## RESULTS

### BAN data between 2006–2016

There has been a consistent growth of BAN members over the last ten years (Figure 1).

As speculated, the geographic distribution of BAN members in Brazil follows the demographic concentration of the population (Figure 2).

Brazilian Neurological Congresses occur every two years and they are among the biggest neurological congresses of the world.

The scenario (2016) of elected representatives in BAN shows that there is a higher prevalence of elected members from the south and southeast regions (Figure 3).

### BAN member census (2016)

The response rate was 20.10% (652/3,240). Participation of members from big cities was most prevalent, and there were representatives from all BAN categories and all States.

Almost 20% of neurologists were young, and 36.7% of neurologists had more than of 20 years of neurological practice.

This survey showed that 48.6% of BAN members work in a private clinic/hospital; 27.3% work in the public system; and 3.1% do not work in a neurological practice. Regarding academic activities, 6.9% of members work exclusively at a university, 12.7% work part time and 1.5% are volunteers.

The main areas of interest were general neurology (60.3%), dementia (40.8%), headache (40.1%), stroke (35.4%), epilepsy (34.8%), movement disorders (25.4%), electroencephalography (17.1%), and pain (13.9%).

The members strongly approved of the BAN activities: the medical journal (*Arquivos de Neuro-Psiquiatria*), the regular publication for members (*ABNews*), the RIMA system, educational efforts, and on-line courses. The worst scores were in professional defense and a few scientific committees.

## DISCUSSION

Today, the BAN has almost 4,000 members with 86% of them being neurologists. It is important to clarify that only some of the Brazilian neurologists are members of BAN. In Brazil, a neurologist can work after final, recognized, residency without a BAN certification. However, the importance of a BAN title has been increasing. Nowadays, more hospitals are asking for BAN certification, which may explain the growth of membership.

There is an interesting distribution of BAN neurologists per 100,000 population. The south, southeast, and central Brazilian territories have a higher density of BAN

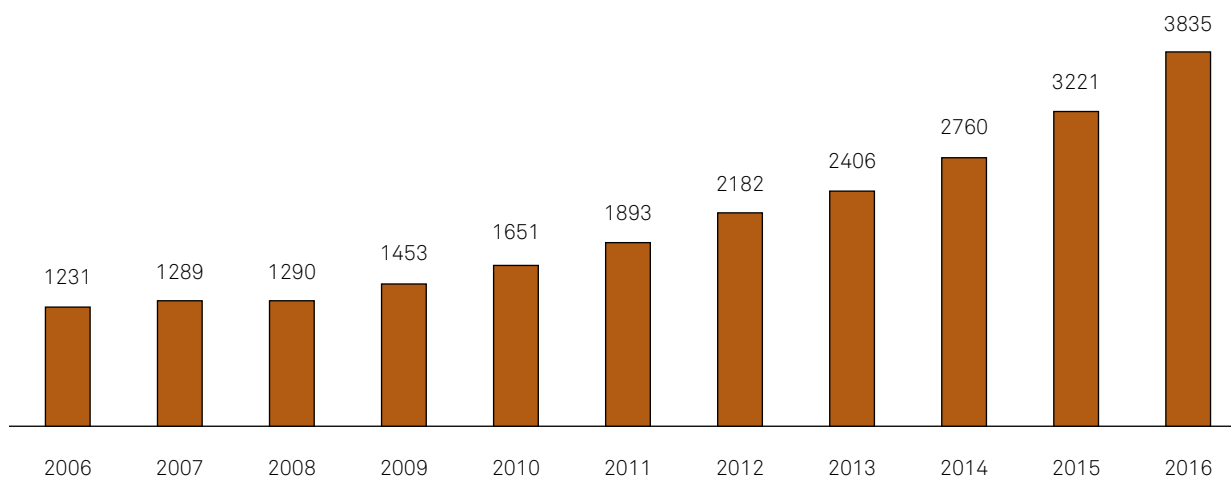


Figure 1. Brazilian Academy of Neurology membership by year.



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