

**3rd European Public Health Conference
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Amsterdam, Netherlands**

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World Health Organization (WHO)
Regional Office for Europe

Definition of public health

“Public health is the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through organized efforts of society”

– Sir Donald Acheson, 1988

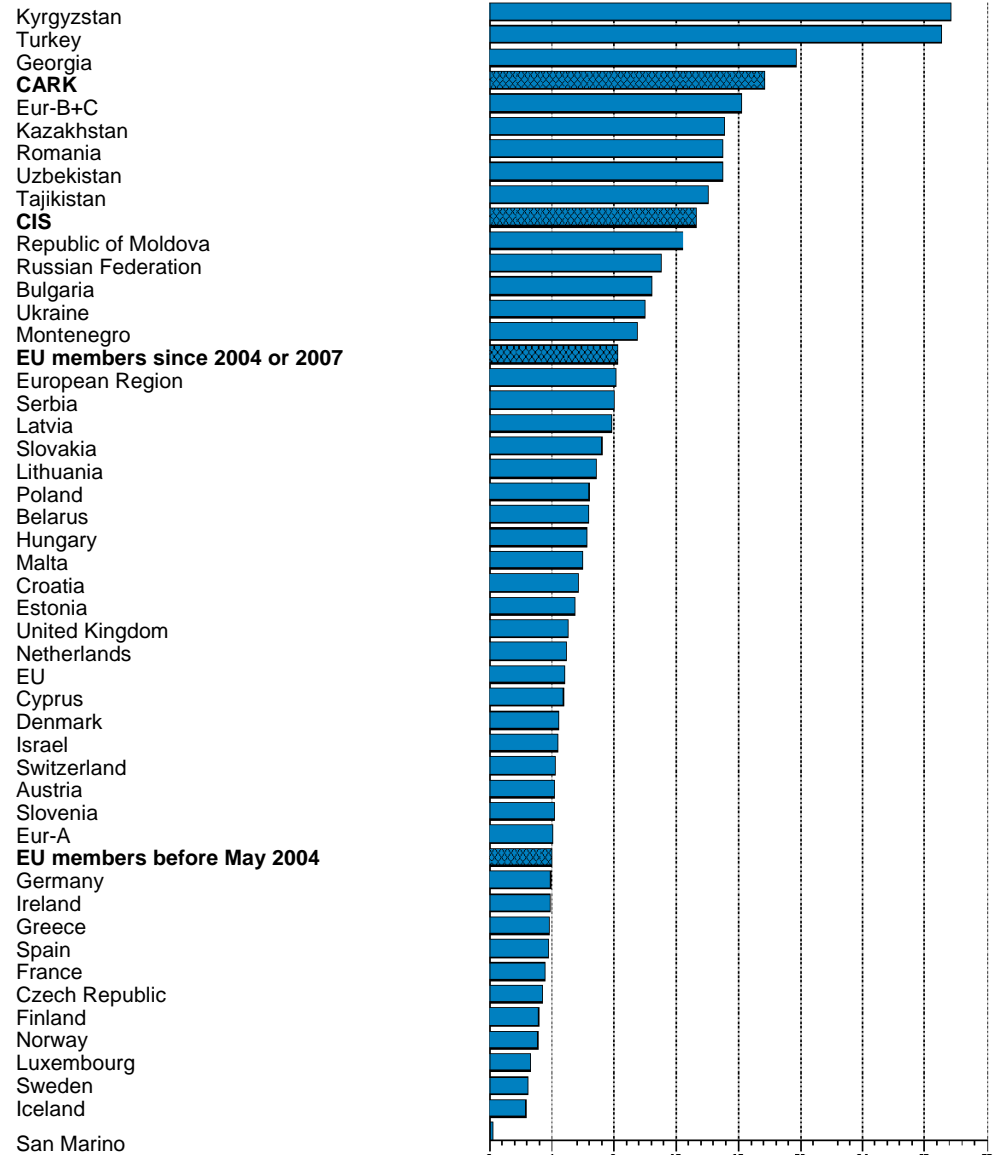
WHO European Region

- Comprises 53 countries from Greenland and Iceland in the west, to the Pacific coast of the Russian Federation in the east
- Contains almost 1 billion people
- Shows great diversity, with health-related inequalities persisting between and within countries, stratifying populations according to ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, educational status and geographical area

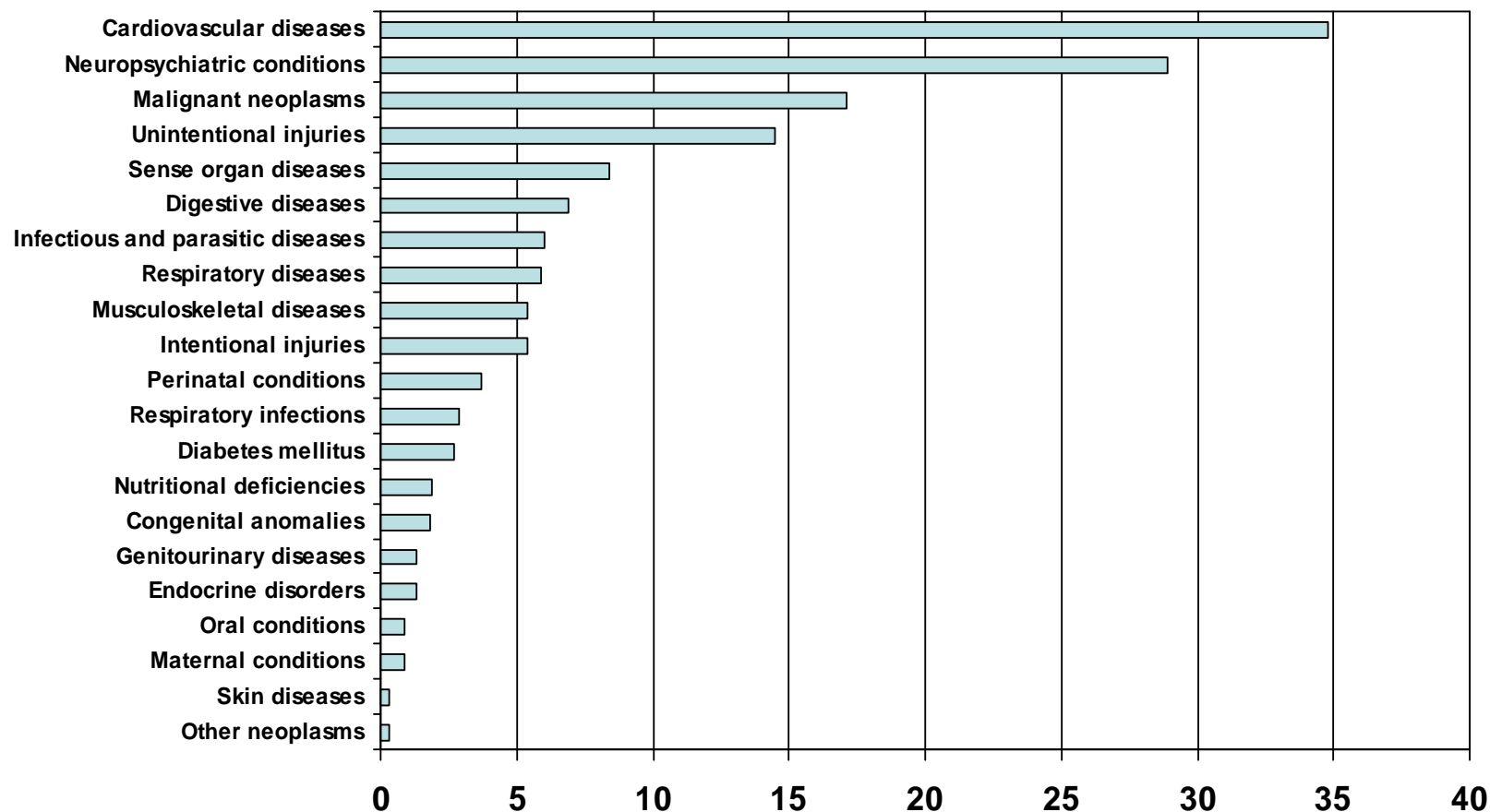
Addressing health inequities and the social determinants

While overall population health has improved, serious inequalities exist depending on ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, educational status and geographical area.

One illustrative example is infant mortality, shown on the right with 2005 WHO data.



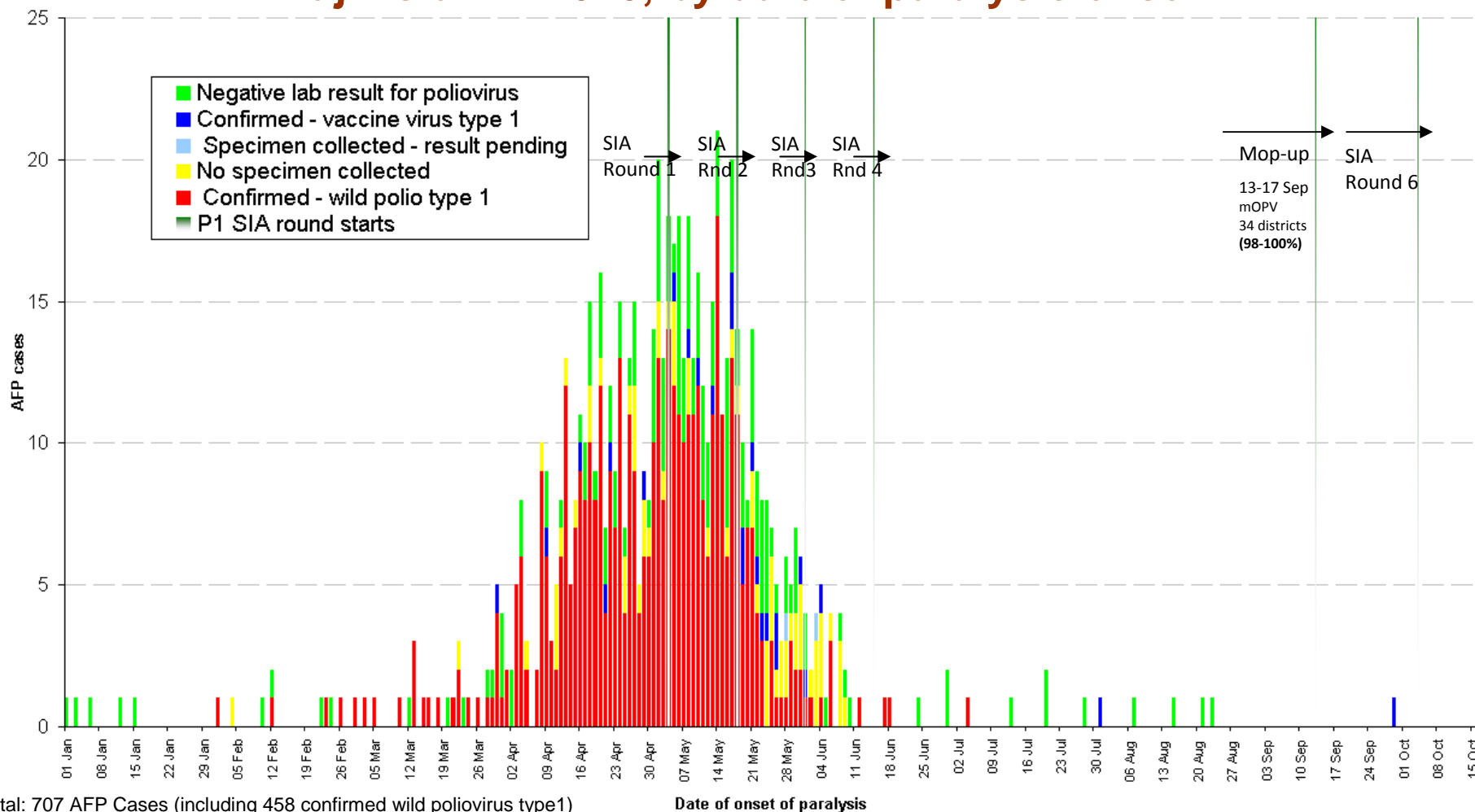
Burden of disease in the European Region by disease group (millions of disability-adjusted life-years – DALYs)



Source: WHO Global Burden of Disease estimates for 2004.

Millions of DALYs

Laboratory-confirmed cases of polio and acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) in Tajikistan in 2010, by date of paralysis onset



Total: 707 AFP Cases (including 458 confirmed wild poliovirus type1)

Note. SIA = supplementary immunization activity.

Data as of 28 October 2010

Source: weekly AFP reporting to WHO Regional Office for Europe.

New European health policy: Health 2020

- Will be developed through participatory process with Member States, sectors and partners
- Will be informed and underpinned by a European study on social determinants
- Will integrate policy areas and renew the commitment of the Regional Office to public health
- Will renew emphasis on further developing public health systems, capacities and functions and promoting public health as a key function in society
- Will clarify the linkages between public health and the health care system, particularly primary health care (Tallinn Charter, 2008)
- Will position health as a critical development sector, and make linkages with other sectors to promote health as a governmental responsibility under the health ministry
- Will inspire Member States to develop, renew and update their national health policy and strategies
- Will be led by the Global Policy Council



Strategic partnerships

- **Objective:** to create strategic relations with all partners in the public health arena at international, regional and national levels
- **New partnership strategy** to be presented for endorsement by the WHO Regional Committee for Europe in 2011
- **First steps taken: partnership agreement** with the European Commission (EC), discussions with the Global Fund and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)



Regional collaboration: an EC/Regional Office shared vision for joint health action

Six flagship initiatives as part of joint declaration

1. One health security system to protect Europe
2. One health information system to inform Europe
3. Sharing and exploiting good practice and innovations
4. Exchanging information and advocating policies to tackle health inequalities, also for future generations
5. Informing and facilitating efforts to invest in health to mitigate effects of economic crisis
6. Strengthening of in-country cooperation through joint advocacy, information exchange and health assessments

WHO European review of social determinants and the health divide

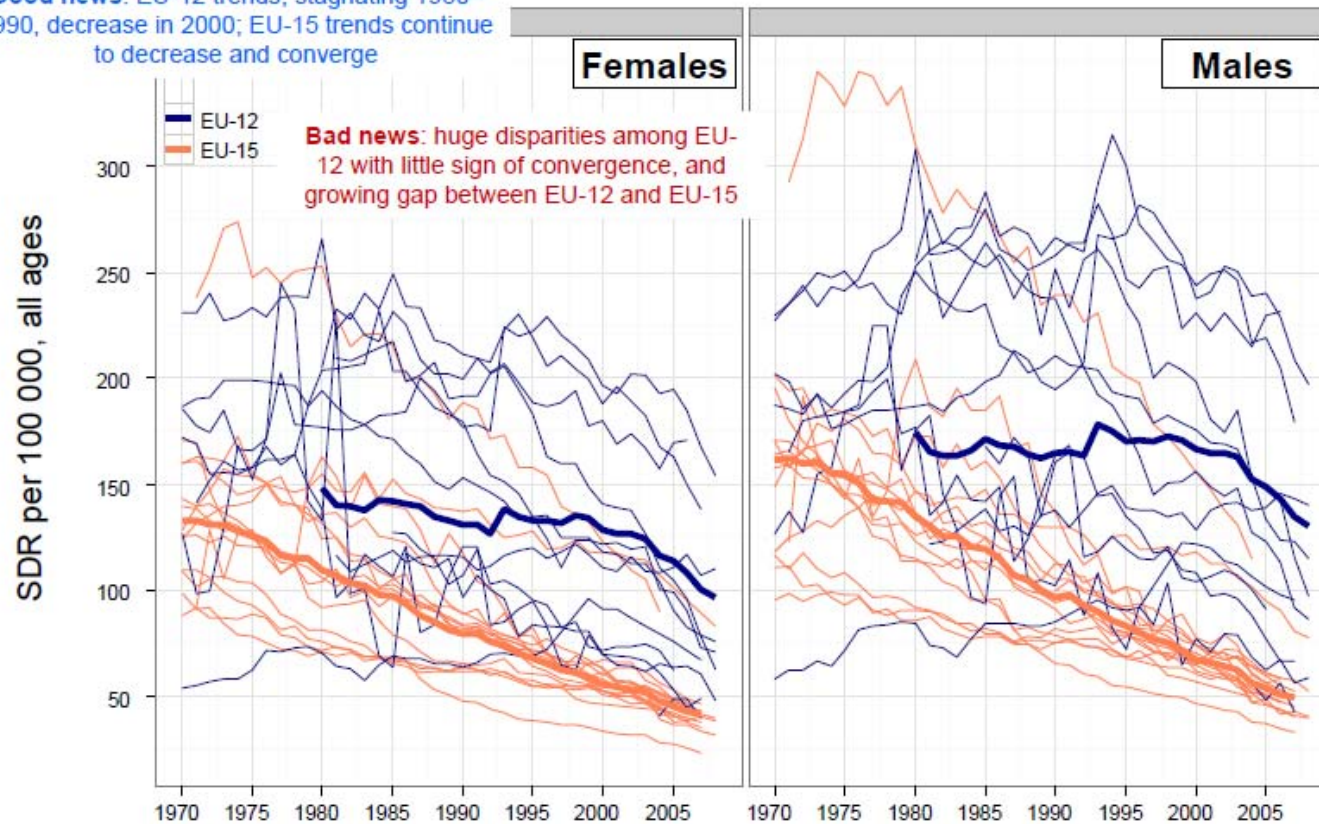
Provide evidence on the nature and magnitude of health inequities across the Region and their relationship to social determinants

Investigate gaps in capacity and knowledge to improve health through action on social determinants

Synthesize evidence on the most promising policy options and interventions for addressing social determinants and reducing health inequities in diverse country contexts

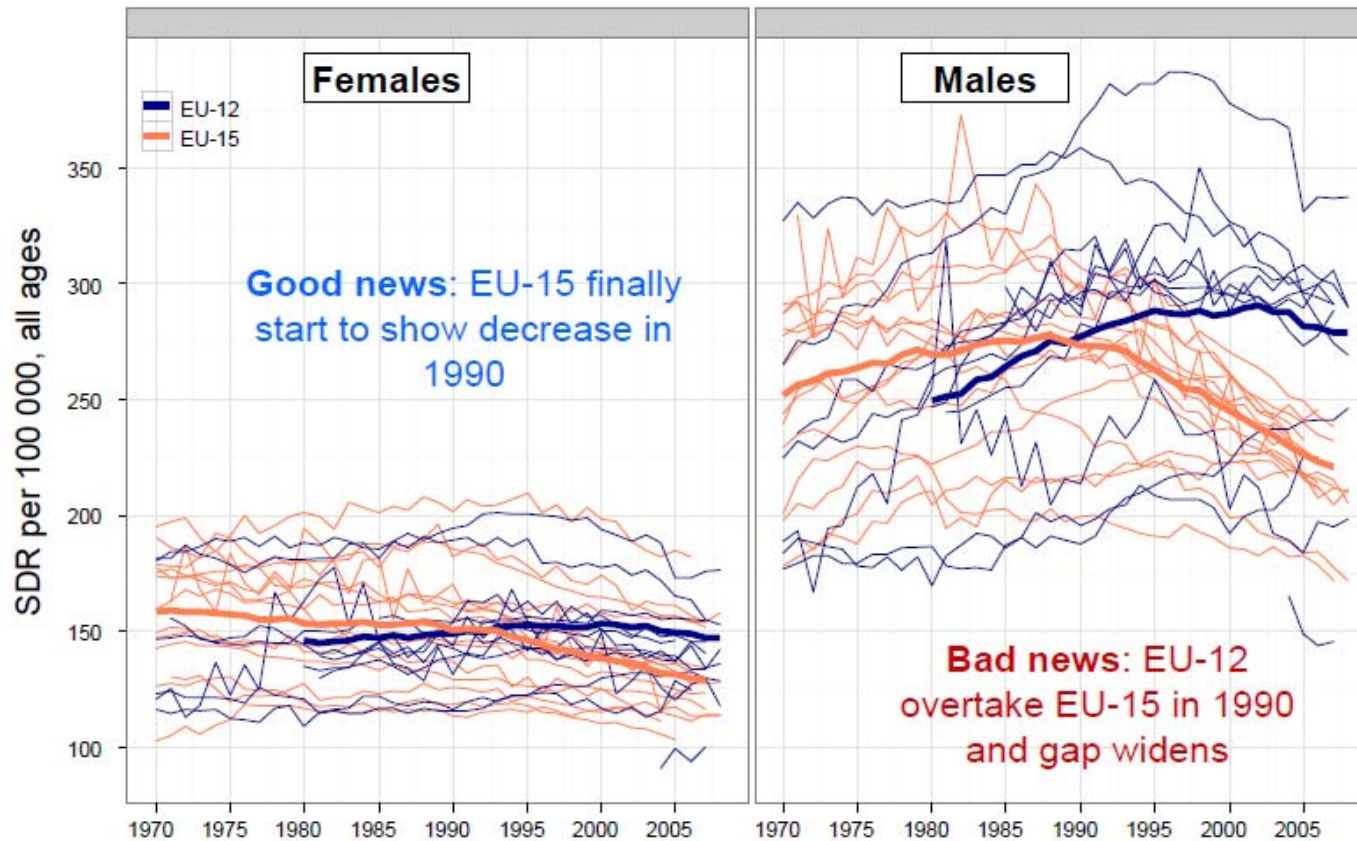
Trends in mortality from cerebrovascular disease in EU countries, 1970–2007

Good news: EU-12 trends, stagnating 1980–1990, decrease in 2000; EU-15 trends continue to decrease and converge



Source: European Health for All database, WHO/Europe, 2010.

Trends in mortality from malignant neoplasms in EU countries, 1970–2007



Source: European Health for All database, WHO/Europe, 2010.



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**World Health
Organization**

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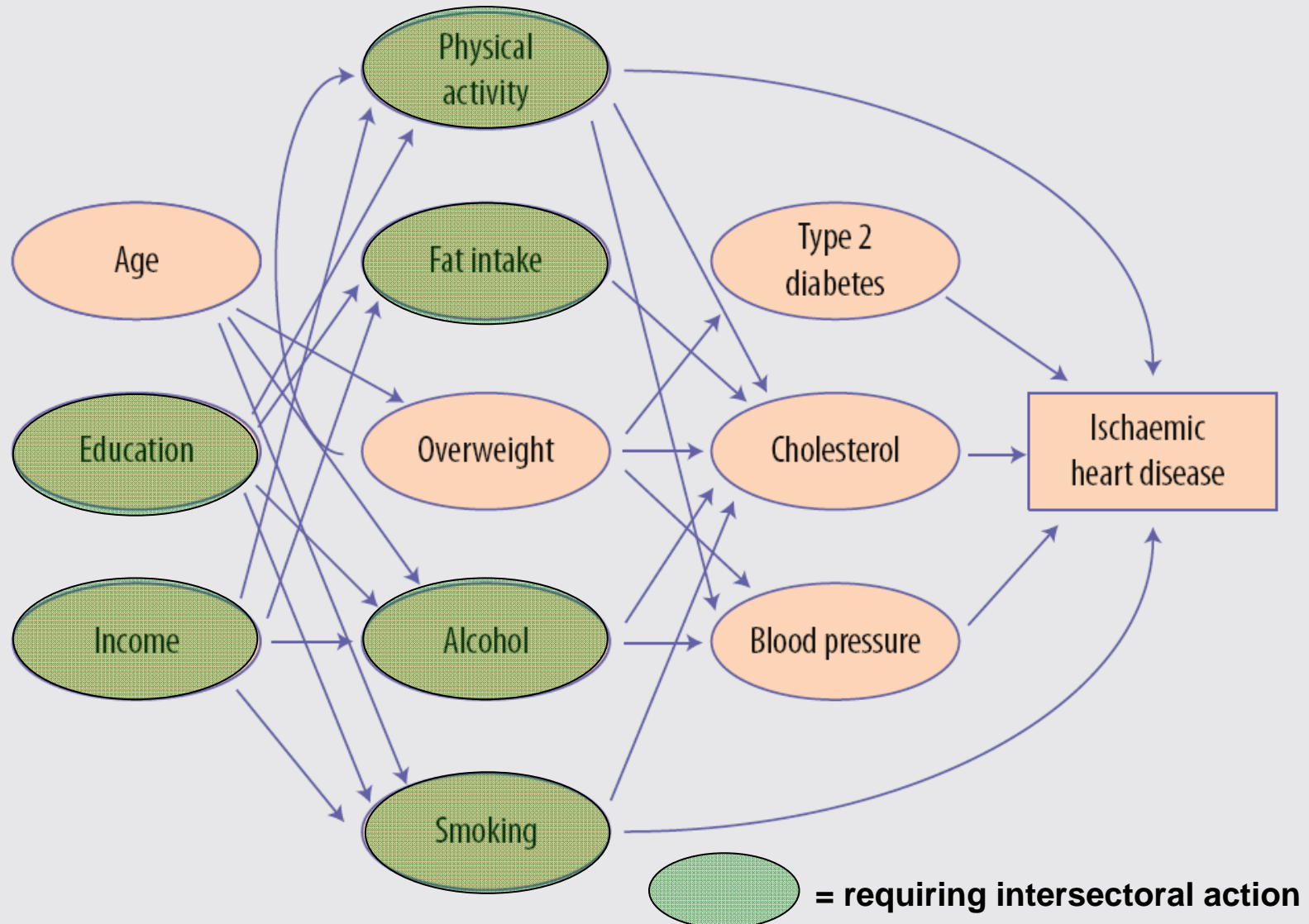
European Public Health Association conference

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Key features of HiAP approach

- A coordinated (joined-up) approach to government policies where health and health equity are considered core values in government vision and strategies
- HiAP applies to the international level, as well as to all levels of government in countries
- Health most often is not an (explicit) value or goal in most other sectors' policies, so aiming for common, consistent (health enhancing) goals is essential
- HiAP is increasingly becoming an imperative in the light of accumulating knowledge on the determinants of health (and the root causes of ill health) and a number of pressing global challenges: climate change, economic crisis, ageing of population, urbanization, chronic diseases, growing inequalities, migration trends

The case for intersectoral action: the example of heart disease

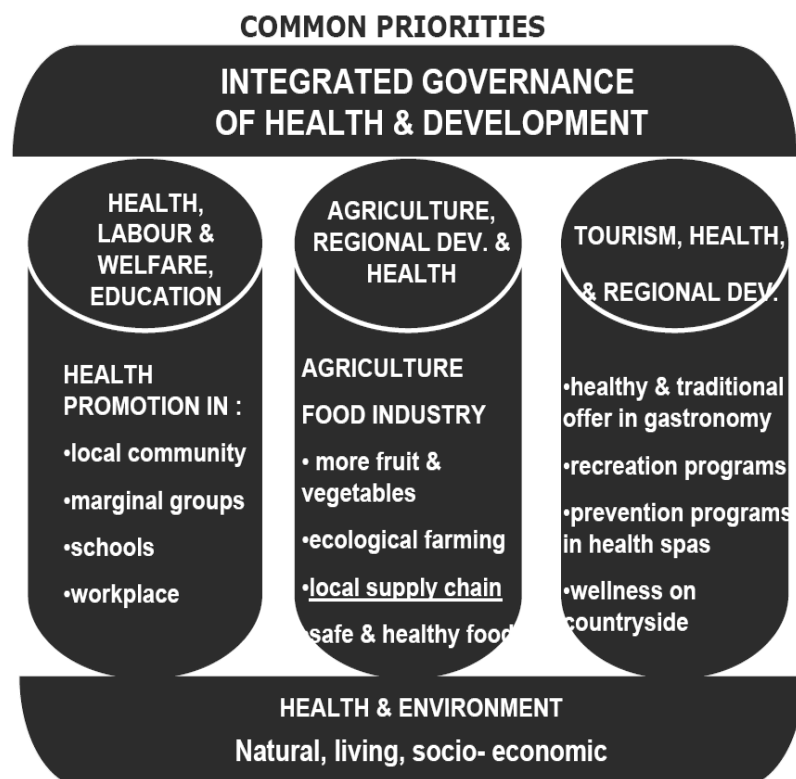


Helping each sector achieve its own goals

Goals	Sectors interested
Reduce emissions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">– air pollutants– greenhouse gases– noise	Environment Health
Reduce congestion	Transport
Reduce road traffic injuries	Transport Health
Reduce investment in infrastructure to cater for more cars	Transport
Improve accessibility and quality of urban life	Transport Health
Complement technological improvements to vehicles and fuels	Transport
Increase physical activity	Health

HiAP successes

Integrated health and development plans, e.g.:
Promurje region, Slovenia



Whole-of-governemnt approach:
Scotland, United Kingdom



Reviewing public health instruments

- Good evidence already exists on past successes, especially in the field of tobacco control (national initiatives but also the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control)
- WHO Regional Office for Europe will also further develop WHO's global strategy on the harmful use of alcohol, and the global action plan for 2008–2013 on noncommunicable diseases