



# Tackling Health Inequalities in Lithuania

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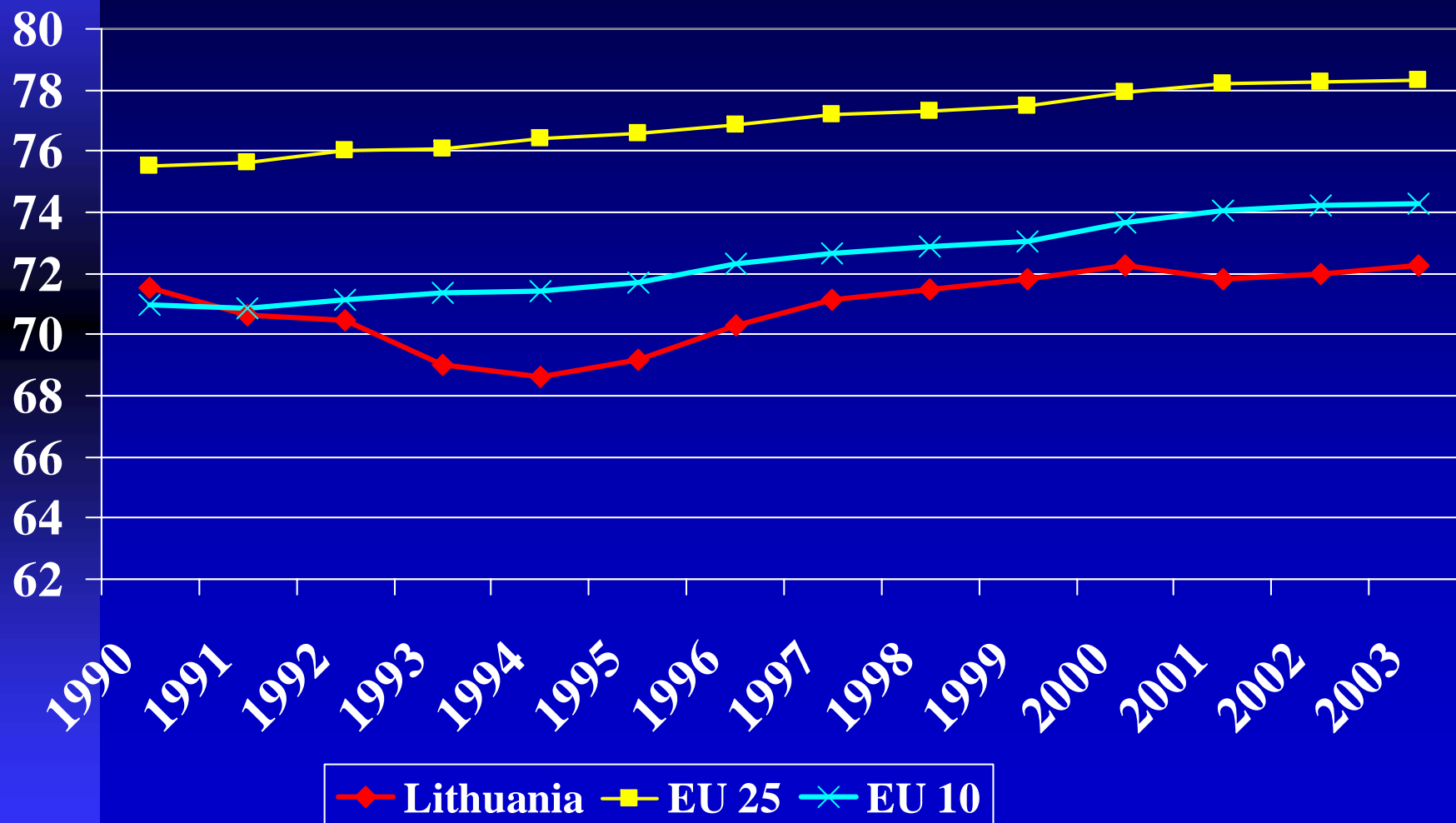
# Republic of Lithuania (2004)



- Territory: 65 303 km<sup>2</sup>
- Population: ~3.43m. (83.5% Lithuanians, 6.7% Poles, 6.3% Russians, and 3.5% others)
- Live births per 1000 population: 8.8
- Crude death rate per 1000 population: 12.0
- Population growth per 1000 population: -3.2
- Infant mortality per 1000 live births: 7.9



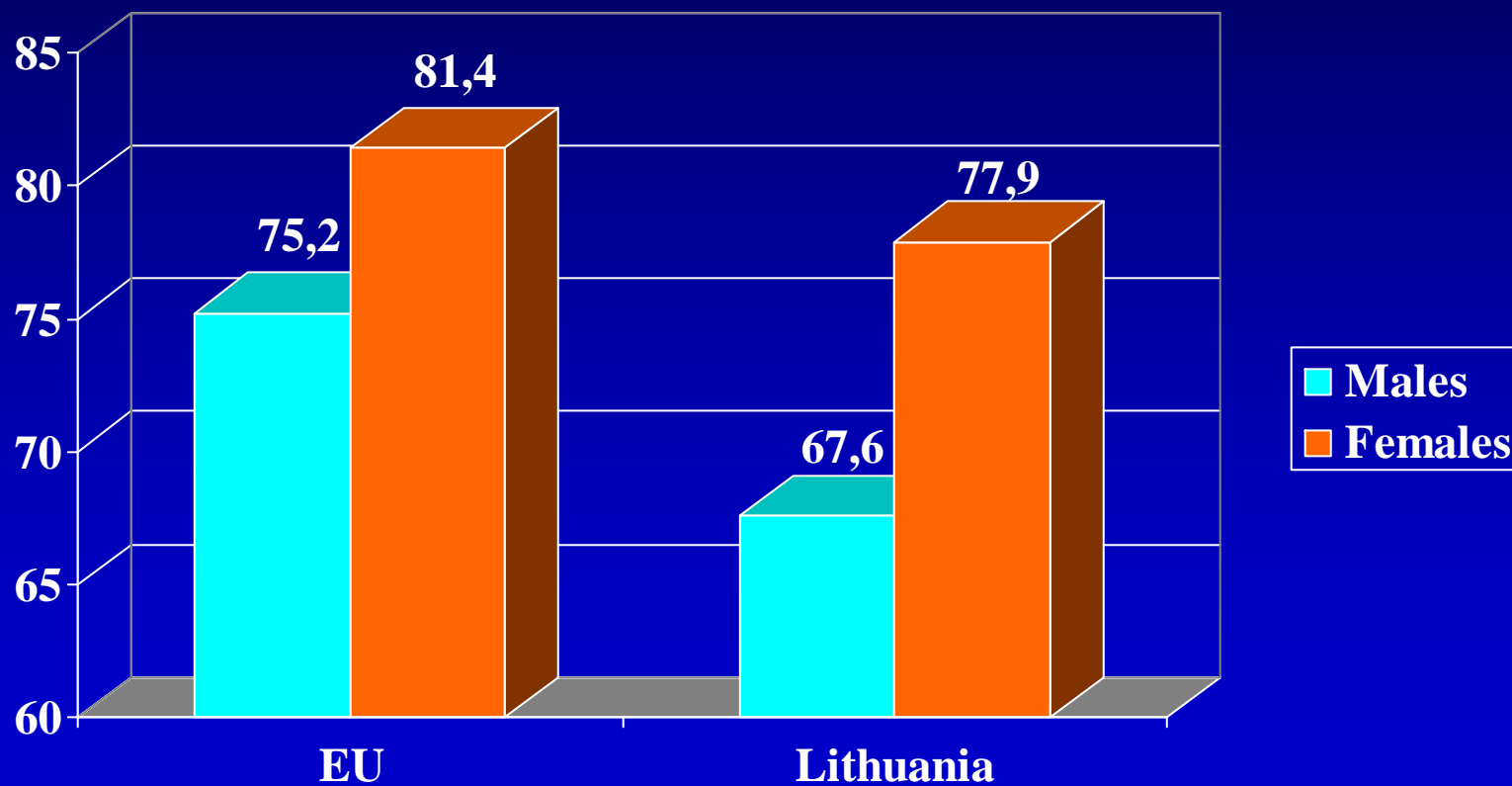
# Life expectancy at birth in Lithuania and EU (in years)



Source: WHO/Europe, European HFA Database, June 2005



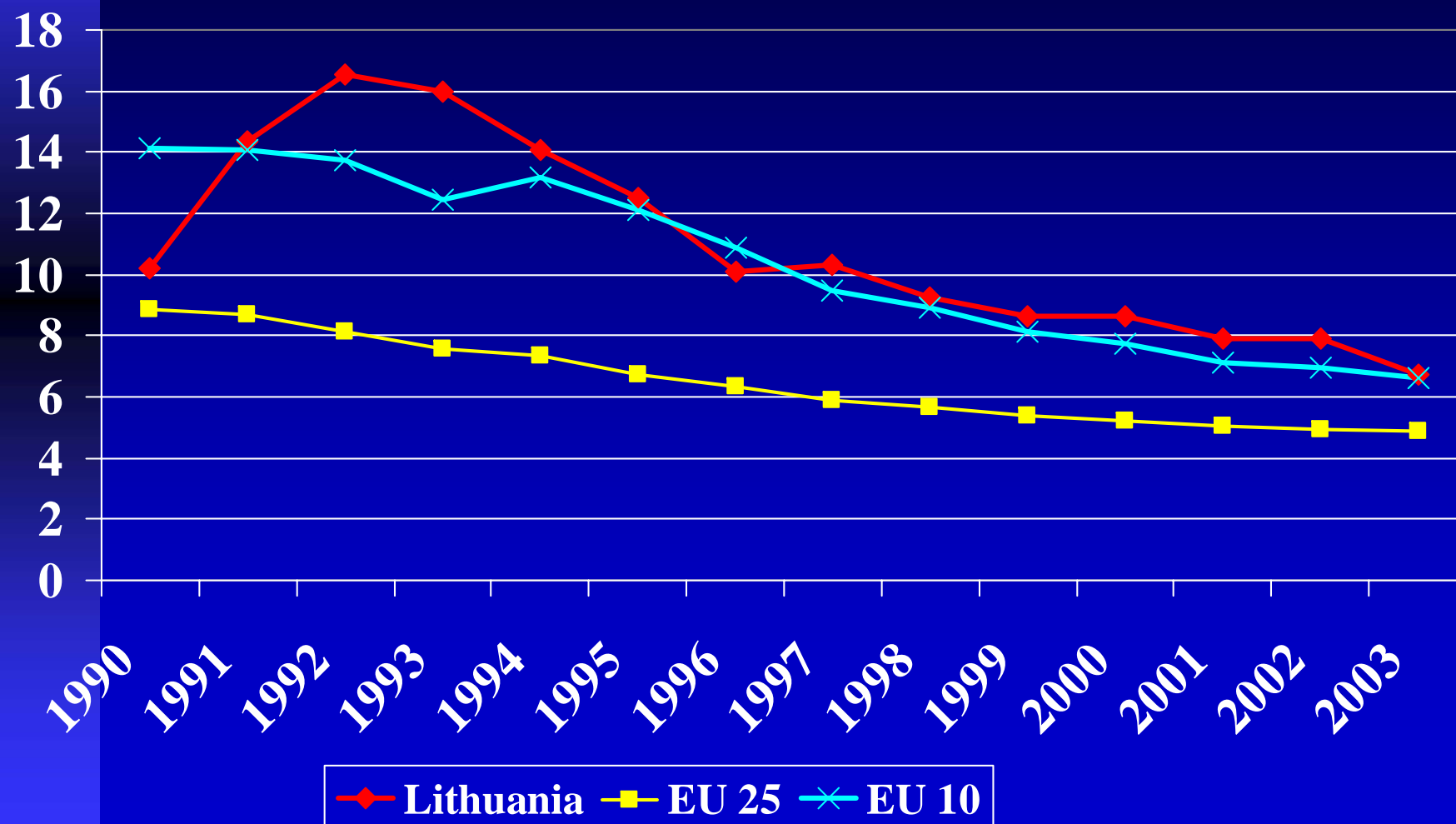
# Life expectancy at birth among males and females in Lithuania and EU (in years)



(WHO, 2003)



# Infant deaths per 1000 live births in Lithuania and EU (in years)

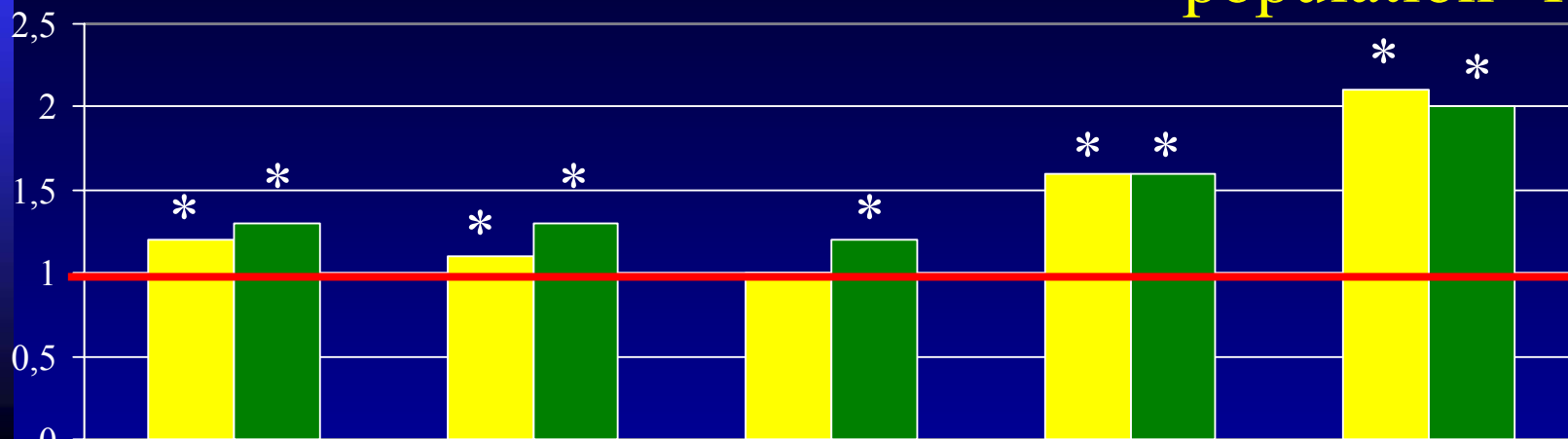


Source: WHO/Europe, European HFA Database, June 2005

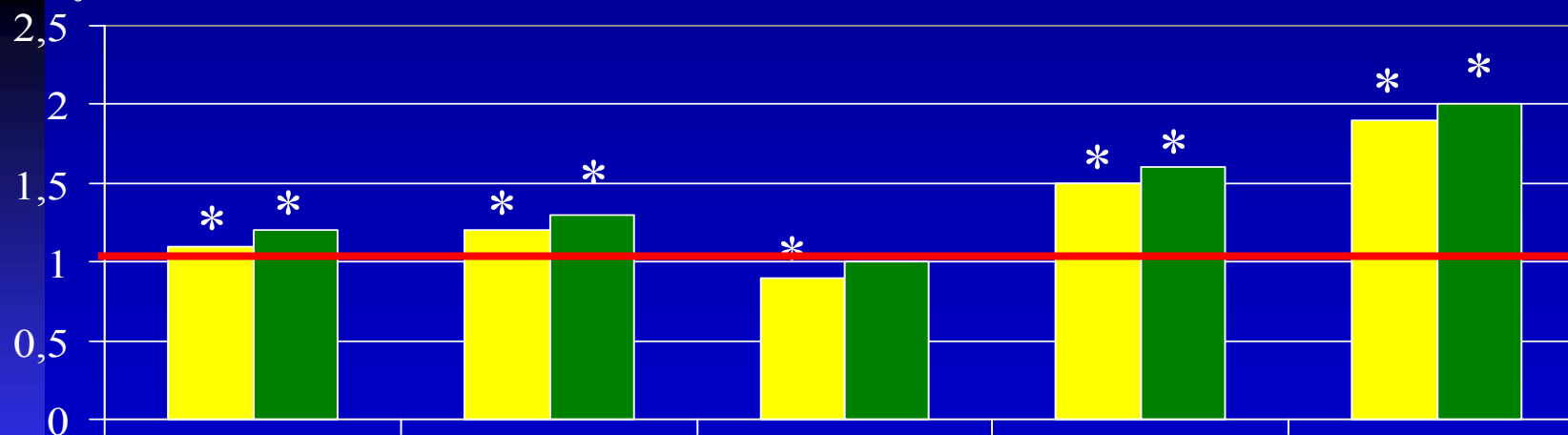


# Relative death rates in rural compared to urban population - 1990 and 2000 (mortality in urban population=1)

Males



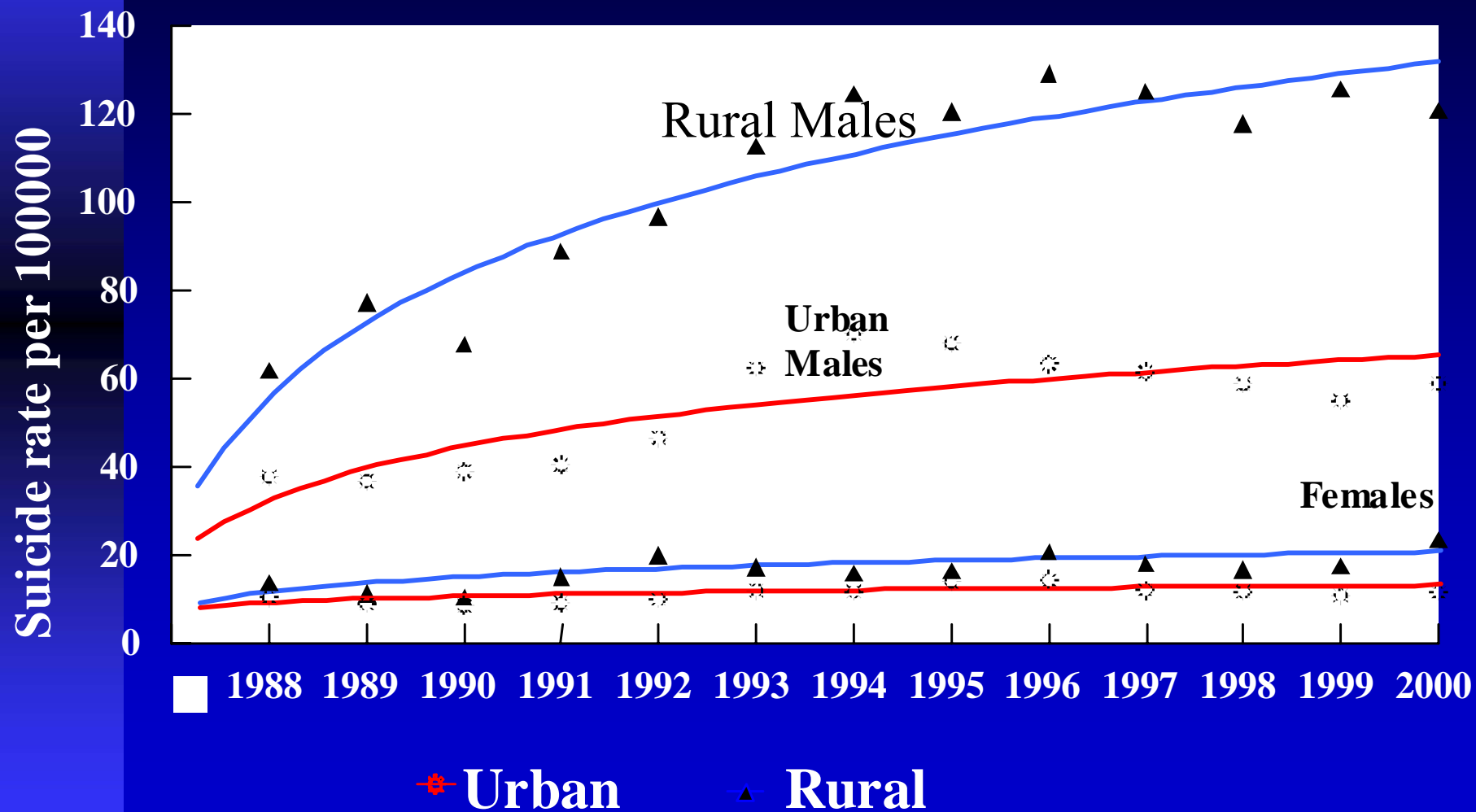
Females



All causes    Cardiovascular diseases    Cancers    Accidents    Respiratory diseases



# Suicide rates in urban and rural populations





# Steps towards tackling health inequalities

## ■ Research projects

- ◆ Education, gender, family income and place of residence were significant predictors of health inequality
- ◆ Higher education, higher income and urban residence were strongly positively correlated with better self reported health status

## ■ Policy formulation addressing HI in Lithuania





# Political commitments

- Lithuanian Health Programme 1998-2010  
(adopted by the Parliament in July 1998)
  - To reduce mortality and increase average life expectancy
  - To secure equality in health and healthcare
  - To improve quality of life
- By the year 2010 differences in health and healthcare between various socio-economic population groups should be reduced by 25 per cent



# Health Programme Midterm Evaluation

- Consensus Conference in the Parliament, October 2005
  - Achievements and results of Lithuanian Health Programme midterm evaluation
  - Close partnership for health - commitments of 6 ministers (Ministers of Health, Environment, Economy, Social Affairs and Labor, Education and Science, Transport)
  - Further main priorities:
    - Focus on poverty reduction policies, ensuring adequate environment of health protection and promotion
    - Promotion of sustainable development
    - Focus on children and youth health



# Intersectoral collaboration: nation-wide programmes and strategies

- Long-Term Development Strategy of the State
- National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion 2005-2006
- National Tobacco Control Programme
- National Alcohol Control Programme
- Lithuanian Housing Strategy
- Lithuanian Regional Development Programme 2003-2005
- Regional Policy Strategy of Lithuania until 2013
- National Child Welfare Policy Strategy and Action Plan 2005-2012
  
- National Public Health Strategy (2006-2013) and Action Plan 2006-2008 (2005, draft)
- State Mental Health Strategy (2005, draft)



# Essence of the Programmes

- Prevention of poverty and social inequalities
- Provision of proper and safe environment
- More focus on vulnerable groups (gender, age, lower social groups etc...)
- More balanced regional development



# Regional perspective of using EU Structural Funds' support (2004–2006)



14 projects, granted support 2.18 million EUR.

Development and modernisation of general practise services infrastructure

16 projects, granted support 2.08 million EUR.

17 projects, granted support 2.32 million EUR.

Strengthening and development of cardiologic health care services through modernisation of health care institutions

1 project, granted support 19.66 million EUR (1 applicant and 39 partners).



# National Future Actions: Partnership with other Players

- Mainstreaming health issues into other sectors' policies
- Better involvement of various stakeholders (national and local authorities, NGOs, private sector, academic society, media, community)
- Adequate information, awareness raising (politicians, social partners, media, community)
- Research and development of policies to tackle health inequalities
- Health and healthy lifestyle – as an everyday value



# National Future Actions: Health Sector

- Tackling the broad spectrum of health determinants: implementation of preventive programmes and initiatives
- Ensuring acceptable, efficient, effective health services
- Better defined indicators for monitoring inequalities in health care provision and quality of life
- Participation in the EU wide initiatives (EU Public Health Programme 2003-2008 etc.)



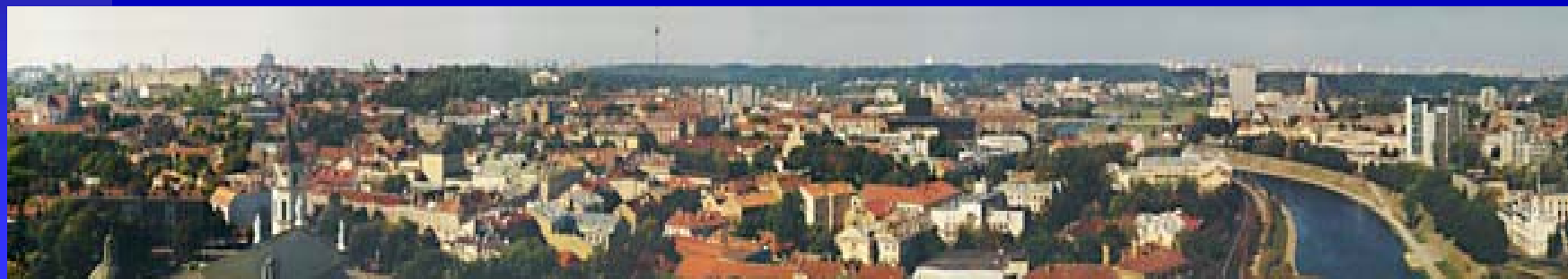
# Suggestions for the European level

- Strengthened international collaboration
  - Closer partnership between MS and the EU
  - Share of experience and best practices of different policy approaches to reduce HI
- Coordination of initiatives at the European level
  - EU expert working groups (e.g. on Social determinants of Health inequalities)
  - Establishing of networks
  - Elaboration of new policy approaches
- Integration of health issues into other policies
  - Strong links between economic strategies and health policy
  - Health impact assessment – as a tool for policy development





Thank you !



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