



European Union

Health Policy Forum

The Survey on the Impact of Economic Crisis on EUHPF Members

EUHPF

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Economic crisis in Europe

- The worst economic crisis in the post-war history
 - Negative growth
 - High unemployment
 - High budget deficits
- In countries with high budget deficit and debt governments reduced public spending including expenditure in the health sector



Potential Health Impacts

- Reduced access to health
 - Decreased public funding for health sector and health programmes
 - Decreased contributions by individuals to health insurance scheme
 - Direct impact on health of individuals
 - Unhealthy habits (poor nutrition, smoking, alcohol, etc.)
 - Mental diseases, suicides
- Key concern of public health professionals
- Need to find realistic solutions



EUHPF Response

- **Open letter to policy-makers**
- **Presentations to EESC and WHO**
- **Decision to carry out a survey among EUHPF members**



Survey

- Questionnaire
 - Open questions
 - Administered via e-mail
 - Short, medium and long-term impacts on the organisation
 - Specific impacts on funding and staff



Analysis

- 27% response
- Qualitative analysis
- Separate analysis for three types of organisations:
 - Umbrella EU or national organisations predominantly active in advocacy, communication, education and research
 - Local organisations doing field work (health promotion, health care, counselling, education) **outside of the healthcare systems**
 - Professional associations and organisations representing local health care organisations or individuals active **within healthcare systems**



Impact on umbrella organisations

- Most organisations do not feel any impact yet because they live of pre-crisis fundraising
- Some organisation report drop out of members and lower income from membership fees due to their members' financial problems
- Reduced endowment/investment incomes due to lower interests and share price
- Both public donors and private philanthropic organisations reduce grants or review their priorities
- EU funding is vital but the intervention rate is low so organisations compete for co-financing



Impact on umbrella organisations

- Uncertainty over future income
- No new recruitment and freeze on salaries
- Suspended development plans
- Postponed planned actions and programmes
- Contingency planning



Impact on local organisations outside of healthcare systems

- Funded mainly by public authorities or international and national philanthropic organisations
- Both sources reduce grants and review their grant making priorities
- Reduction from public sources in range 5-10%, in some regions such as the Baltic states this can be higher



Impact on local organisations outside of healthcare systems

Consequences

- Moratorium on staff and salaries or in worse cases lay offs and reduced salaries
- Focus on core activities, less capacity to contribute to policy development at national or EU level
- Discontinuation of activities or reduction of the scope
- Abandoned development plans
- Restructuring
- Close of organisation



Impact on organisations within the healthcare systems and professionals

- Reduced public contributions
- Reduced private contributions through insurance schemes or direct payments for services
- Consequences:
 - Moratoria on new staff
 - Salary freeze or reduction
 - Less funding for professional development



Impact on organisations within the healthcare systems and professionals

- Increased unemployment or “desertion” of professionals from their professions
- Reduced range and quality of service
- Prevention programmes, communication and research are cut first
- Revision and suspension of development plans



Conclusions

- Evidence of impacts on all types of public health organisations
- In all types of organisations uncertainty prevents effective planning
- Health prevention, education and research activities are affected most
- In healthcare systems the range and quality of care is affected
- Significant differences between MS – few effects in SE, NO, CH but serious impacts in LI, LT, HU, IE

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