

Closing the Gap
Strategies for action to tackle
Health Inequalities in Europe
(2004 – 2007)

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EuroHealthNet: who are we?

- European network of national and regional agencies accountable for public health, health promotion and disease prevention
- 30 agencies in 25 European countries
- **Mission: to contribute to a healthier Europe with greater equity within and between countries**
- Office based in Brussels

EuroHealthNet: what do we do?

Advocacy



Project Outcomes

- Partnerships
- Health across policies
- Inform policy makers
- Communication

= *Raise awareness*

- Evidence
- Sharing good practices among Member States
- Recommendations

= *Implement*

3 European Projects on Health and Equity

1. The role of health promotion in tackling health inequalities (1999-2001) – DG Sanco
2. Transnational exchange project on Health and social inclusion (2003-2005) – DG EMPL
3. Closing the Gap (2004-2007) – DG Sanco

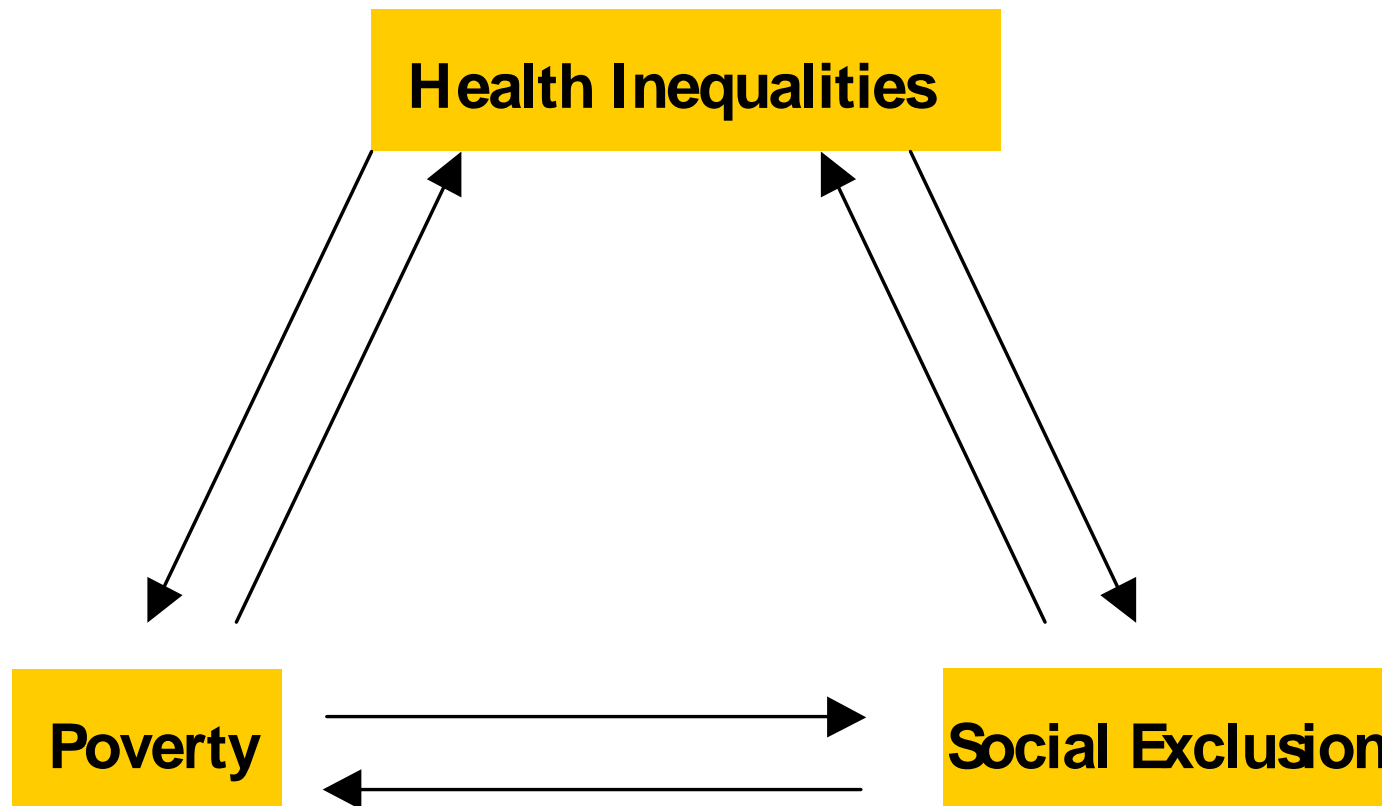
1. The role of health promotion in tackling health inequalities (1999-2001)

- Aim: to identify policies and HP interventions across Europe that address health inequalities
- High Level Round Table BE Presidency Dec 2001

8 recommendations to policy makers:

- National Health Inequality Targets
- Addressing health determinants in other policy areas
- Equal access to Health Services
- Working at the local level
- Monitoring
- Health Impact Assessment
- Evaluation
- Dissemination of good practice

2. Trans-national exchange project on health and social inclusion (2003-2005)



Compendium of 52 good practices



PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION AND TACKLING HEALTH INEQUALITIES IN EUROPE

AN OVERVIEW OF GOOD PRACTICES FROM THE HEALTH FIELD



PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION AND TACKLING HEALTH INEQUALITIES IN EUROPE

National agencies in 13 countries collected 52 good practices in the health field that address socially excluded groups.

Methods include:

- outreach work,
- empowerment,
- intercultural mediators
- working in (self-help) groups etc

3. Closing the Gap (2004 – 2007)

- Co-funded by DG Sanco
- Contract holder is BZgA: the Federal Centre for Health Education in Köln, Germany
- focus on knowledge transfer, action and implementation (as far as possible)



22 European Partners



Czech Republic: National Institute of Public Health

Denmark: National Institute of Public Health

England: NICE

Estonia: National Institute for Health Development

Finland: STAKES

France: INPES

Germany: Federal Centre for Health Education

Greece: Institute of Social and Preventative Medicine

Hungary: National Institute for Health Development

Ireland: Department of Health and Children

Italy: Experimental Centre for Health Education

Latvia: Health Promotion State Agency

Lithuania: National Centre for HP and Education

The Netherlands: NIGZ

Norway: Research Centre for Health Promotion

Poland: Polish Society of Health Education

Scotland: NHS Health Scotland

Slovakia: Public Health Authority in Travná

Slovenia: National Institute of Public Health

Spain: Ministry of Health and Consumer Protection

Sweden: Swedish National Institute of Public Health

Wales: Wales Centre for Health

Observers: Switzerland, Austria and Belgium

Aims and outcomes:

- consensus on a definition of tackling health inequalities
→ *declaration*
- analysis of EU policies that impact on the health gap
→ *strategies for action at EU level (Report)*
- a situation analysis of tackling health inequalities in each of the 22 countries
→ *key strategies for action at national level (National Reports)*
- online Directory of good practices which is part of the Health Inequalities Portal

National level

- National Situation Analysis
 - completed by national focus groups
 - a review of national level policies, structures, monitoring and key actors

- 3 types of HI strategies
 - Specific policies on reducing health inequalities
 - Equity is prominent within general public health policy
 - Wider social justice policies that might impact on HI (NAPs/incl)

Approaches to HI Policy Frameworks

- Legislative commitments
(*e.g. Greece Germany*)
- Explicit goals in national policy documents
(*e.g. Denmark, Italy, Sweden, Poland*)
- Quantitative targets
 - WHO (*e.g. Czech Republic, Latvia*)
 - Fairly general (*e.g. Finland, Netherlands*)
 - Fairly sophisticated, with established frameworks for monitoring (*Ireland, UK*)

Types of national action

- Actions that address social determinants, but with no distinctive focus on HI (*e.g. Cyprus, Greece*)
- Some actions are in place, but relatively modest (*e.g. Belgium, France*)
- Equity features in general public health action plans (*e.g. Hungary, Sweden, Finland*)
- Well integrated and coordinated action plans to tackle HI (*e.g. Ireland, UK*)

Issues for consideration

- Encouraging signs; much wider awareness now than few years ago
- Documentation versus implementation
- There is no single right way to reduce HI
- Think more about the gradient
- There is limited available evidence on effectiveness – are current policy responses appropriate?
- Better monitoring and evaluation is essential

National Situation Analysis (Report & Portal)

1. Evidence and Evaluation
2. Awareness raising (policy, public, media)
3. Working across policy sectors & HIA
4. Support for Regions

National Strategies for Action

European Level

- Aim: to identify and analyse EU policies that impact on health inequalities
 - *Regional policy - Structural Funds*
 - *CAP*
 - *Social & Economic Policy*
- Examples – difficult to assess causality
- Impact on HI: from a European or national perspective?
- Report / final event in Brussels / Portal

Local level: Good Practices Database

- Currently 19 good practices submitted (*Czech R, Estonia, Ireland, Latvia, Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Poland, Sweden*)
- Online submission & Quality Check
- Summer 2006

Selection Criteria:

- Clear aim is to reduce HI
- Effective
- Ongoing
- Fulfill 3/11 quality elements

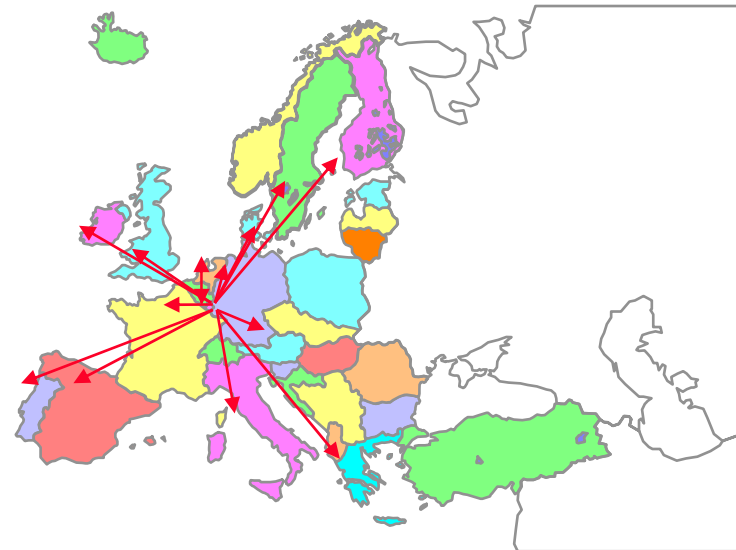
Next Steps: International exchanges

- ✓ 3rd Business Meeting in Brussels (29-30 March 2006) with the 4 workshops to discuss in-depth key themes
- ✓ 4th Business Meeting in Berlin (end of 2006) to finalise the national and European Strategies for Action reports
- ✓ 3rd Advisory Committee Meeting (Autumn 2006) Prof H. Graham, E. Ziglio, Dr. A. Mielck, Prof. M. Whitehead, Dr J. Benach
- ✓ Concluding event during German Presidency, Brussels 7-8 May 2007



23 National Seminars on HI

- To clarify EU policies
- To demonstrate the country's position in the European context re: HI
- To present the targeted *Strategies for Action*
- To demonstrate the use of the Portal and Good practices database
- Exchange of speakers
- Invite EuroThine researchers



Lastly...

- We welcome the Expert Group and we look forward to working together

- More info, reports and contact details are available on:
 - www.health-inequalities.org
 - www.eurohealthnet.org

Address  <http://www.healthinequalities.org/>  Go  Links >>

European Partners for EQUITY IN HEALTH

Closing the Gap

Strategies for Action to tackle Health Inequalities in Europe



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Welcome to the European Health Inequalities Portal!

This portal is a unique space in which you can find recent examples of interventions and policies designed to reduce **health inequalities** in the countries of the European Union.

The portal is a host to:

- Database of Good Practice to Reduce Health Inequalities,
- Country Profiles listing the main policies, actors and tools developed to deal with health inequalities on a national level,
- EU Policy Section containing Case Studies that show how EU Policies and Programmes can affect health inequalities at the national level, and
- Relevant links related to the issue of health inequalities.

The Health Inequalities Portal is the tool to use when planning local projects, understanding the policy context of these interventions and/or conducting exploratory research in the field of health inequalities.

All the material and information presented on this site are a result of the "Closing the Gap: Strategies for Action to Tackle Health Inequalities (2004-2007)" project developed by the Consortium of Partners for Equity in Health and co-funded by the European Commission.

(This project has received funding from the European Commission DG SANCO. The Commission takes no responsibility for text or information presented on this website.)

Featured Project Example



Guardian Angel (Schutzengel)

Model project offering support for families with small children in disadvantaged neighbourhood by family midwife, social worker and parent's café

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