Ms Zsuzsanna Jakab
WHO Regional Director for Europe

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)

Cardiovascular diseases
Neuropsychiatric conditions
Malignant neoplasms
Unintentional injuries
Sense organ diseases
Digestive diseases
Infectious and parasitic diseases
Respiratory diseases
Musculoskeletal diseases
Intentional injuries
Perinatal conditions
Respiratory infections
Diabetes mellitus
Nutritional deficiencies
Congenital anomalies
Genitourinary diseases
Endocrine disorders
Oral conditions
Maternal conditions
Skin diseases
Other neoplasms

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
Strengthening the health and public health systems

Renewing commitment to public health and rejuvenating the work of the Regional Office in this important area
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

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

**Bad news:** huge disparities among EU-12 with little sign of convergence, and growing gap between EU-12 and EU-15.

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

**Females**

- **Good news**: EU-15 finally start to show decrease in 1990

**Males**

- **Bad news**: EU-12 overtake EU-15 in 1990 and gap widens

Health in all policies (HiAP) and health systems

Credit: image reproduced by permission from HAAP Media Ltd. (http://www.sxc.hu/photo/1236960).
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Sectors interested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reduce emissions of:</td>
<td>Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- air pollutants</td>
<td>Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- greenhouse gases</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- noise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce congestion</td>
<td>Transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce road traffic injuries</td>
<td>Transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce investment in infrastructure to cater for more cars</td>
<td>Transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve accessibility and quality of urban life</td>
<td>Transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complement technological improvements to vehicles and fuels</td>
<td>Transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase physical activity</td>
<td>Health</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HiAP successes

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

Whole-of-government approach:
Scotland, United Kingdom

- **COMMON PRIORITIES**
  - Health, labour & welfare, education
  - Agriculture, regional dev. & health
  - Tourism, health, & regional dev.

- **INTEGRATED GOVERNANCE OF HEALTH & DEVELOPMENT**
  - Health promotion in:
    - Local community
    - Marginal groups
    - Schools
    - Workplace
  - Agriculture food industry:
    - Healthy & traditional offer in gastronomy
    - More fruit & vegetables
    - Ecological farming
    - Local supply chain
  - Safe & healthy food

- **HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT**
  - Natural, living, socio-economic

- **Strategic Goals**
  - To reduce factors in the physical and social environments in Scotland that act to perpetuate health inequalities;
  - To build the resilience and capacity of individuals, families and communities to improve their health and
  - To enhance the contribution that public services make to reducing health inequalities.

- **Policy & Action Areas**
  - Early years and young people; Smarter Scotland
  - Tackling poverty and increasing employment; Wealthier and fairer Scotland
  - Physical environment and transport; Greener Scotland
  - Harms to health and wellbeing; alcohol, drugs and violence; Safer and Stronger Scotland
  - Health and wellbeing; Healthier Scotland

European Public Health Association conference
11 November 2010
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