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**Ensuring mental health
in Youth
in modern European
societies**

*EP Round Table event
Brussels
3 December 2008*

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Mental health in children and youth

- Children and young people - Europe's future;
- Today's world: more opportunities but also plenty of risks;
- Many look forward to plenty of future life opportunities, but a significant share is disadvantaged and does experience insecurity, exclusion and poverty early in life;
- 20% of children show mental health and conduct problems;
- Around a half of mental health problems have their onset in adolescence;
- There is a need to make children and young people stronger, by developing resilience and coping skills, and to help those in need through a range of social, educational and medical interventions.



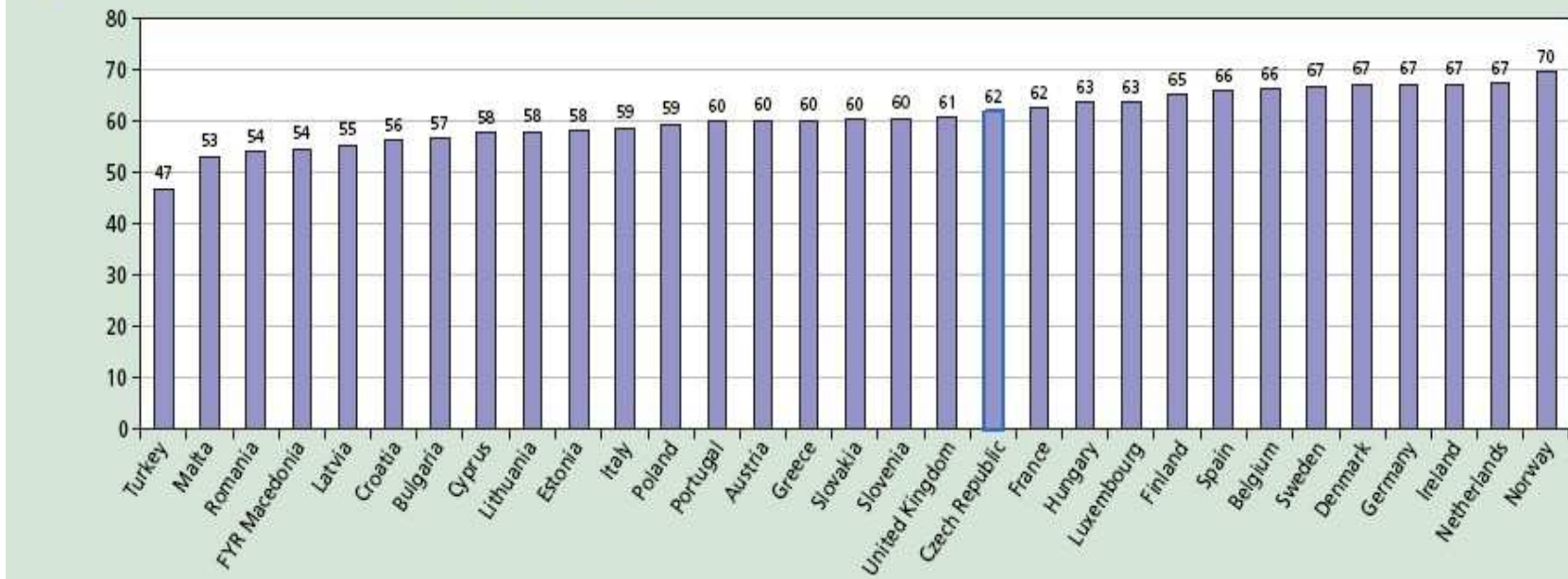
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Mental health in the EU

Second European Quality of Life Survey 2008

Figure 7: Mean mental health index, by country (%)

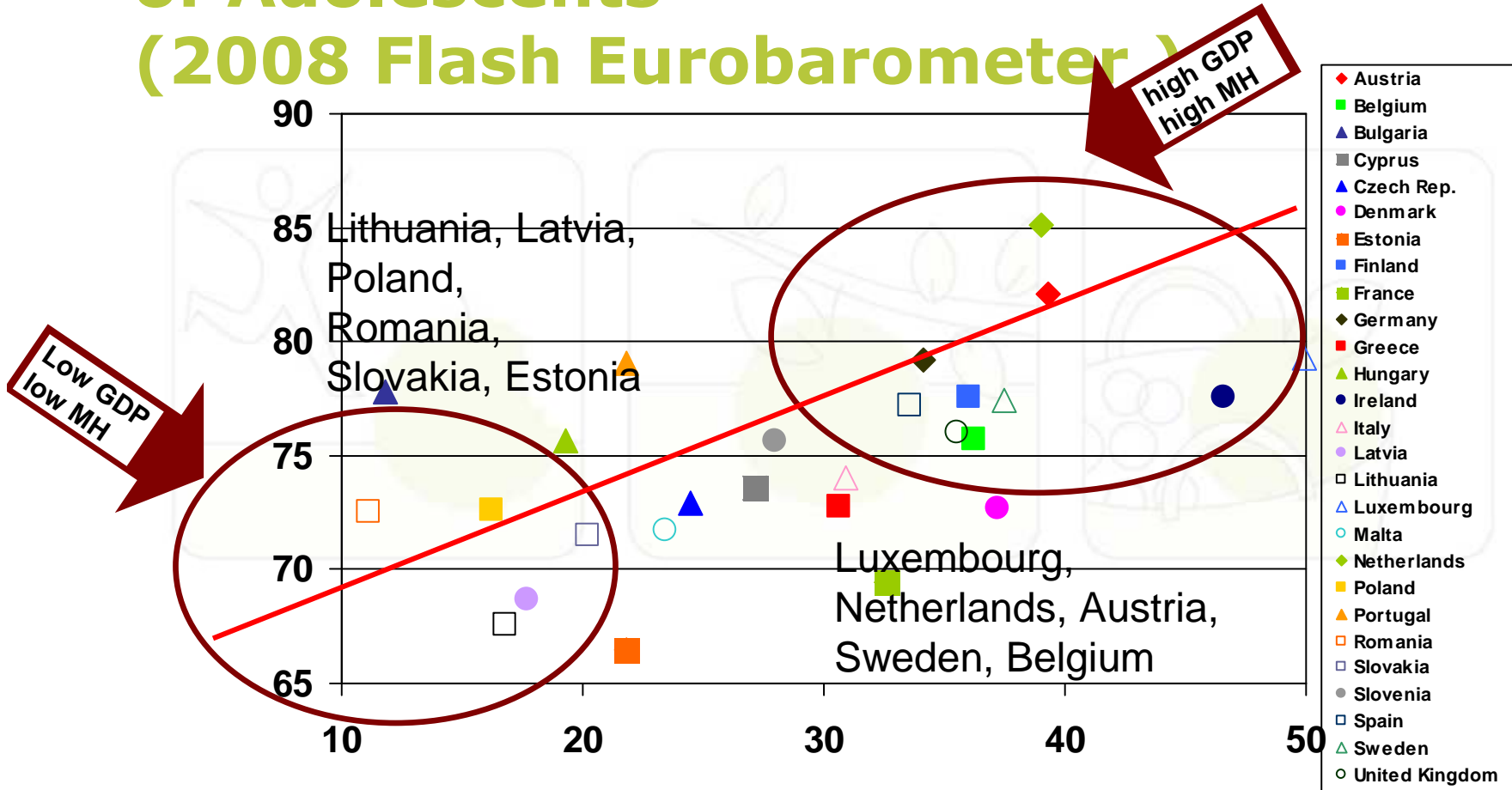




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National Wealth and Mental Wellbeing of Adolescents (2008 Flash Eurobarometer)





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European Pact for Mental Health and Well-being

- Launched at high-level conference of 13 June 2008;
- Conference hosted by Commissioner Vassiliou, in cooperation with Commissioner Spidla, supported by Slovenian EU-Presidency and WHO Europe;
- Participation of EU-Institutions, Member States, Actors from Health, Education, Employment, Social Sectors, NGOs and Civil Society;
- Framework for exchange and cooperation.



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Five Priorities

- Prevention of Depression and Suicide;
- Mental Health in Youth and Education;
- Mental Health in Workplace Settings;
- Mental Health of Older People;
- Combating Stigma and Social Exclusion.



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Thematic conferences

- Mental Health in Youth and Education, Stockholm, September 2009, Swedish Presidency and Commission;
- Prevention of Depression and Suicide, Budapest, December 2009, Hungary in cooperation with Portugal;
- Mental Health of Older People, 1st semester 2010, Spanish Presidency.



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Pact deliverables

- Reports on MH situations, activities, initiatives (Mapping);
- Inventory of good practices: Mental Health and Well-being Compass;
- Jointly supported Recommendations;
- Action commitments: Action plans.

Basis for possible summary conclusions in 2011/12



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Political context

- Council Resolution on the health of youth:
4. special attention should be paid to young people's mental health, particularly promoting good mental health especially through schools and youth work, and to the prevention of self-harm and suicide;"
- EP- report to follow.
- Youth Health initiative in preparation.



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Initiative on Health in Youth

- An initiative of Commissioner Vassiliou in cooperation with the Youth Forum;
- High level conference on 11 July 2009;
- Will address the major health issues concerning young people, such as mental health, addiction, sexual health, HIV/AIDS, environment, employment;
- Young people will be involved in developing solutions.



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Consensus Paper

Mental Health in Youth and Education

- Prepared in a collaborative effort involving research experts, practitioners and policy makers.
- Basis for next steps:
 - Collection of good practices,
 - Development of Recommendations,
 - Action commitments and plan.



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Mental Health in Youth and Education

FAMILY/PARENTING	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Training of Parenting Skills➤ Children of parents with mental health problems
EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ School climate and curricula, Coping skills➤ Training of school staff➤ Peer to peer support➤ Collaboration between schools and external partners
YOUTH AND COMMUNITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Alcohol and drugs➤ Stigma and discrimination, Bullying and violence➤ Social inclusion, Employment➤ Informal learning➤ Healthy neighbourhood and community settings➤ Media and Internet
HEALTH SYSTEMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Eating disorders, self-harm, suicide➤ Early intervention, treatment and care➤ Training and availability of child and adolescent mental health specialities
KNOWLEDGE BASE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Research➤ Information



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Family and Parenting

- Family focussed, evidence-based programmes can have a profound effect on parenting behaviour and the mental health of children.
- What works:
 - Home visits;
 - Parenting programmes.



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Educational institutions

- Educational settings can reach all population;
- Integrating mental health into school climates and curricular as well as extracurricular activities supports learning success (school as a social and learning community).
- What works:
 - Health promoting schools, whole school approach, good and healthy school.



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Youth and Community

- The neighbourhood, community and possibilities to engage in leisure activities have a strong influence on the development and wellbeing of young people.
- What works:
 - Access to physical recreation activities;
 - Peer to peer support systems;
 - Informal learning.



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Health Systems

- Health systems provide treatment and care, but they can also play a central role in preventive action, in liaison with other actors.
- What works:
 - Availability of child and adolescent mental health specialists;
 - Targeted services to specific groups such as migrants, parents with mental health problems, children with a disability etc.



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Next steps

- Meetings with NGOs and stakeholders;
- Collection of information about activities and practices (including through CAMHEE-project);
- Preparation of Presidency conference with partners.