



Financial crisis, austerity and health in Europe

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Thanks to...

Philipa Mladovsky, Jon Cylus, Sarah Thomson, Sanjay Basy, David Stuckler, Johan Mackenbach, Martin McKee

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Health in Europe

Published March 27, 2013

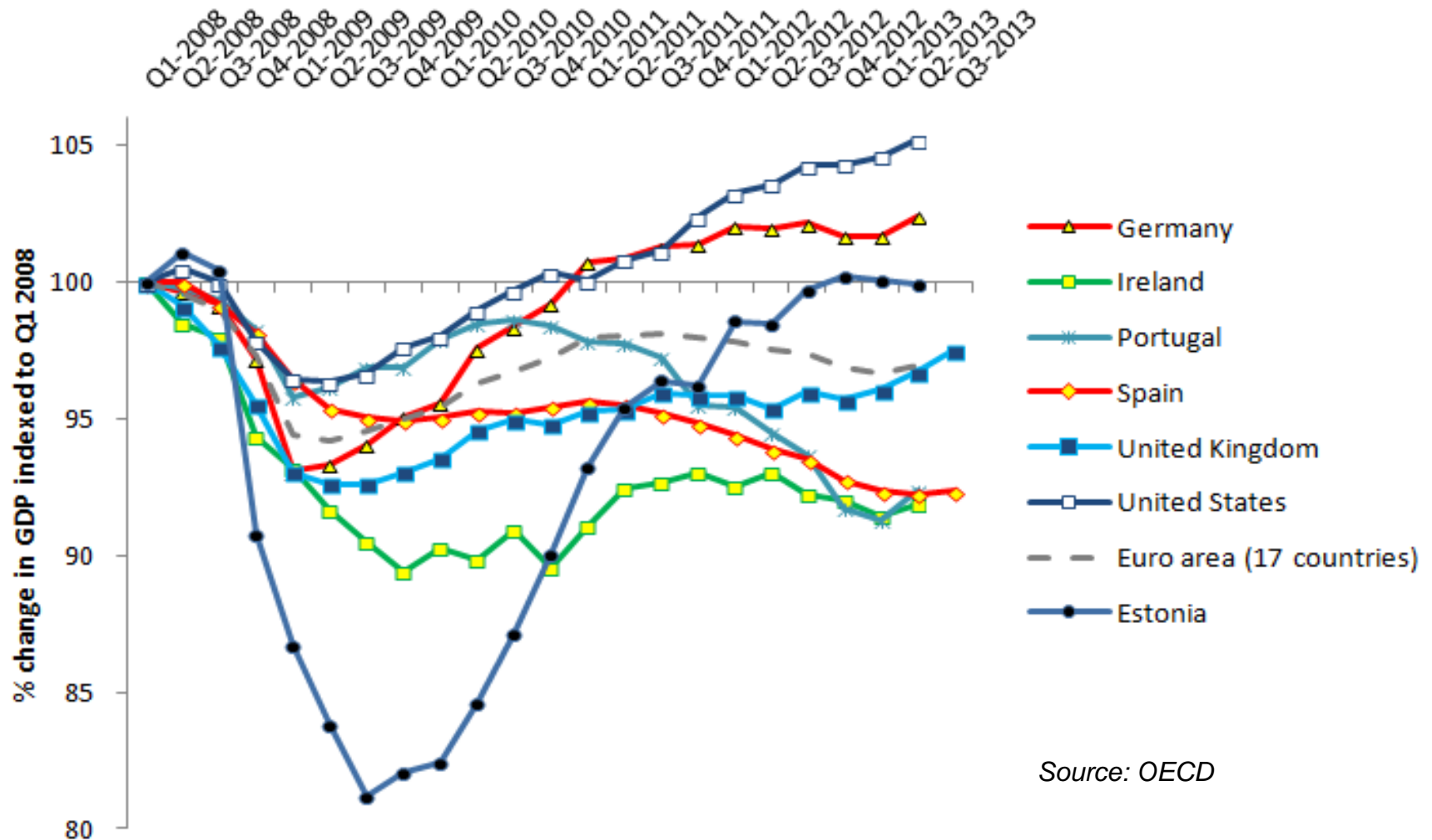
Executive summary

The Lancet Series on Europe provides a comprehensive examination of some of the most important issues affecting the health of people in Europe today. Seven Series papers, led by Professor Martin McKee of the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, cover a diverse range of subjects, from how the financial crisis is affecting health in Europe, to whether children's health services are keeping pace with the changing landscape of child health. In recent years, the 53 countries that make up WHO's European Region have undergone turbulent political changes that have left an indelible mark on the health of their populations, including a striking east-west divide.





Where are we now?

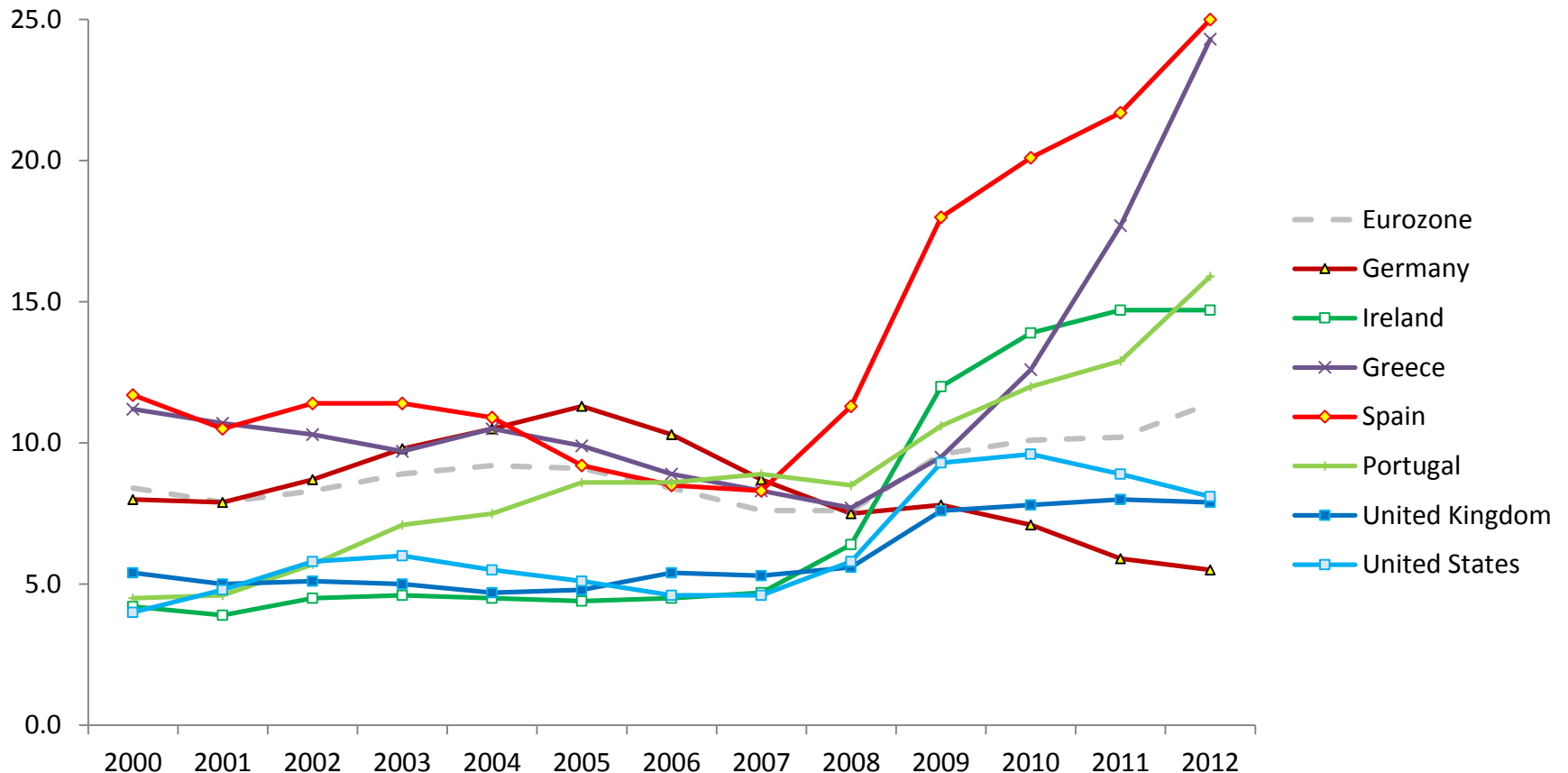


Source: OECD



Where are we now?

Unemployment (%), selected countries





Impact on health – previous crises

Effects of recession

- **Good for health?**

vs

- **Bad for health?**

Mortality increases during economic growth (Ruhm, Tapia Granados), high income countries, up to mid1990s.

Association of unemployment with adverse health outcomes in individual-level studies (Scandinavia, US, Canada, EU).



Impact on health – previous crises

Articles

The public health effect of economic crises and alternative policy responses in Europe: an empirical analysis



David Stuckler, Sanjay Basu, Marc Suhrcke, Adam Coutts, Martin McKee

Summary

Background There is widespread concern that the present economic crisis, particularly its effect on unemployment, will adversely affect population health. We investigated how economic changes have affected mortality rates over the past three decades and identified how governments might reduce adverse effects.

Methods We used multivariate regression, correcting for population ageing, past mortality and employment trends, and country-specific differences in health-care infrastructure, to examine associations between changes in employment and mortality, and how associations were modified by different types of government expenditure for 26 European Union (EU) countries between 1970 and 2007.

Lancet 2009; 374: 315–23

Published Online

July 8, 2009

DOI:10.1016/S0140-

6736(09)61124-7

See [Comment](#) page 270

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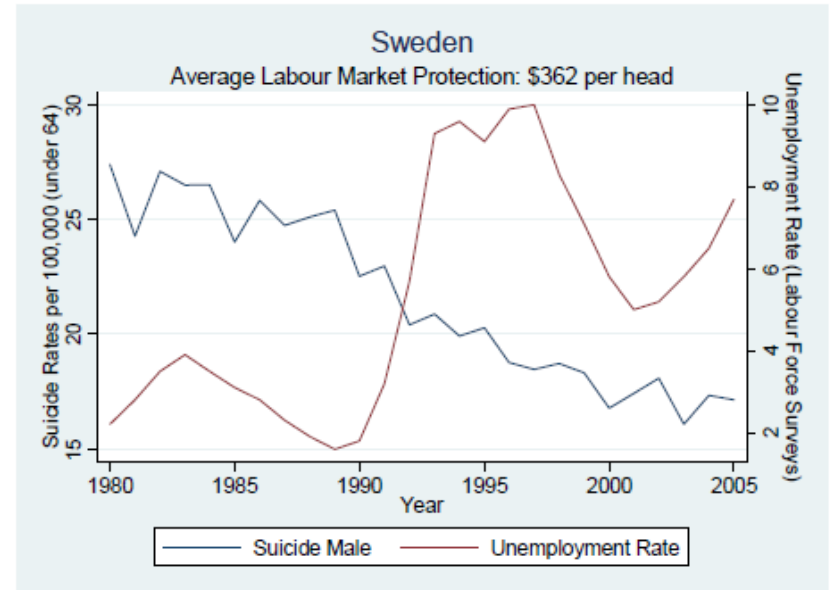
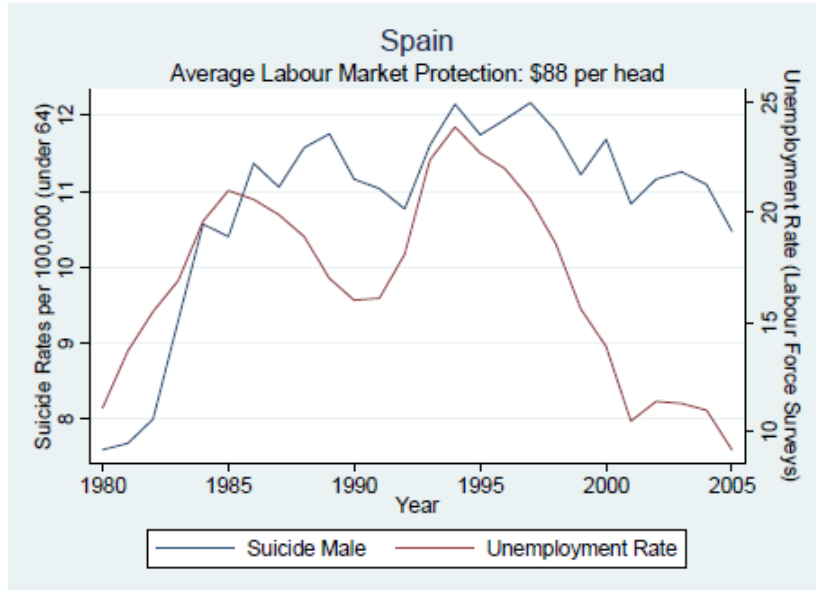
[www.thelancet.com](#)

1% rise in unemployment → increase in suicides and homicides, decrease in RTAs

3% rise in unemployment → increase in alcohol-related deaths



Impact on health – previous crises



Stuckler et al (2009)

Unemployment, suicide rates and ALMP spending in Spain and Sweden



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ANALYSIS

Response on bmj.com

“Programmes must... be designed to prevent further negative social problems, or financial risk. The programmes must clearly benefit the people of the country. There should be no partiality among citizens, whether employed or unemployed.”

Monique J Grant-Coke, nursing program coordinator and assistant professor, Jamaica

🔴 To submit a rapid response, go to any article on bmj.com and select “Respond to this article”



Budget crises, health, and social welfare programmes

Governments may feel they are protecting health by safeguarding healthcare budgets, yet **David Stuckler, Sanjay Basu,** and **Martin McKee** argue that social welfare spending is as important, if not more so, for population health

\$100 per capita per year increase in social welfare spending was associated with a 1.19% drop in all-cause mortality



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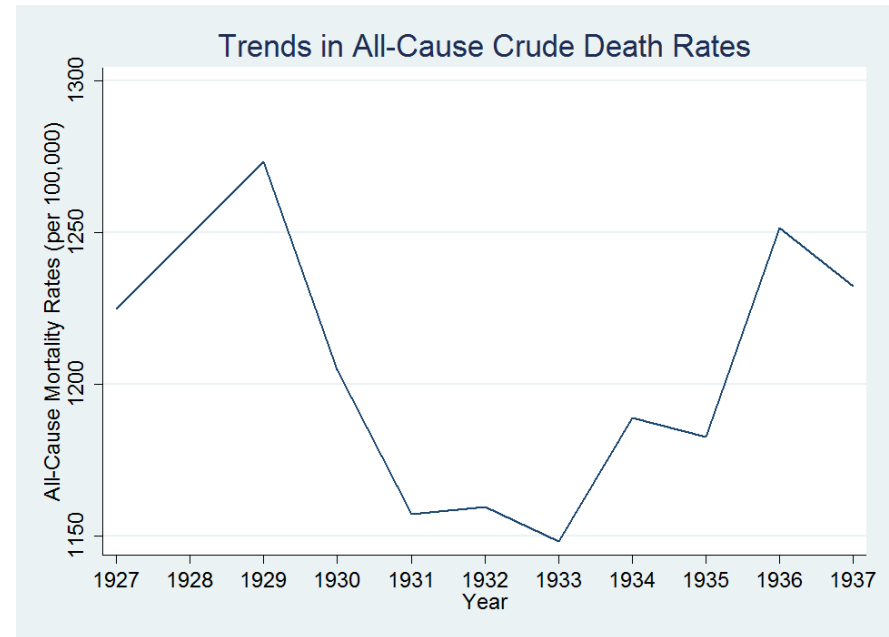
JECH Online First, published on March 24, 2011 as 10.1136/jech.2010.121376

Research report

Banking crises and mortality during the Great Depression: evidence from US urban populations, 1929–1937

David Stuckler,^{1,2} Christopher Meissner,³ Price Fishback,⁴ Sanjay Basu,⁵
Martin McKee⁶

- Increase in suicides, decrease in RTAs;
- Changes in other causes unrelated to bank suspensions

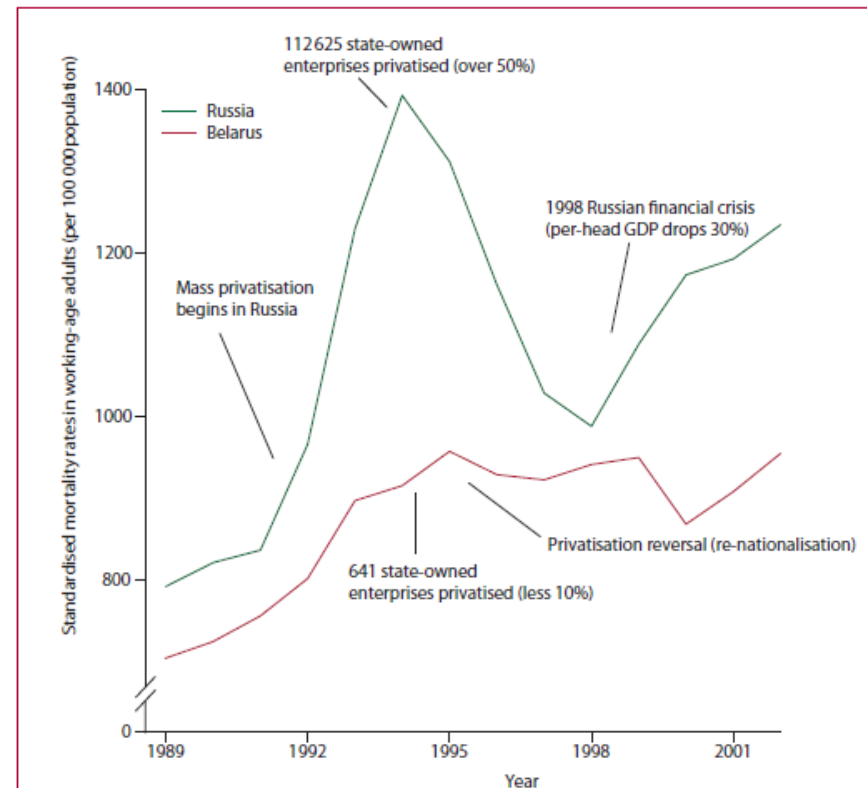




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Collapse of the Soviet Union 1990s

- 5-7 years loss of life expectancy in males and 2-3 years in females
- Change in death rate associated with privatization pace and level of social cohesion



Stuckler D, King L, McKee M. (2009) Mass privatisation and the post-communist mortality crisis: a cross-national analysis. *Lancet* 2009; 373: 399–407



Impact on health – current crisis

How much do we know?



Table D

Countries Copy Print Quit

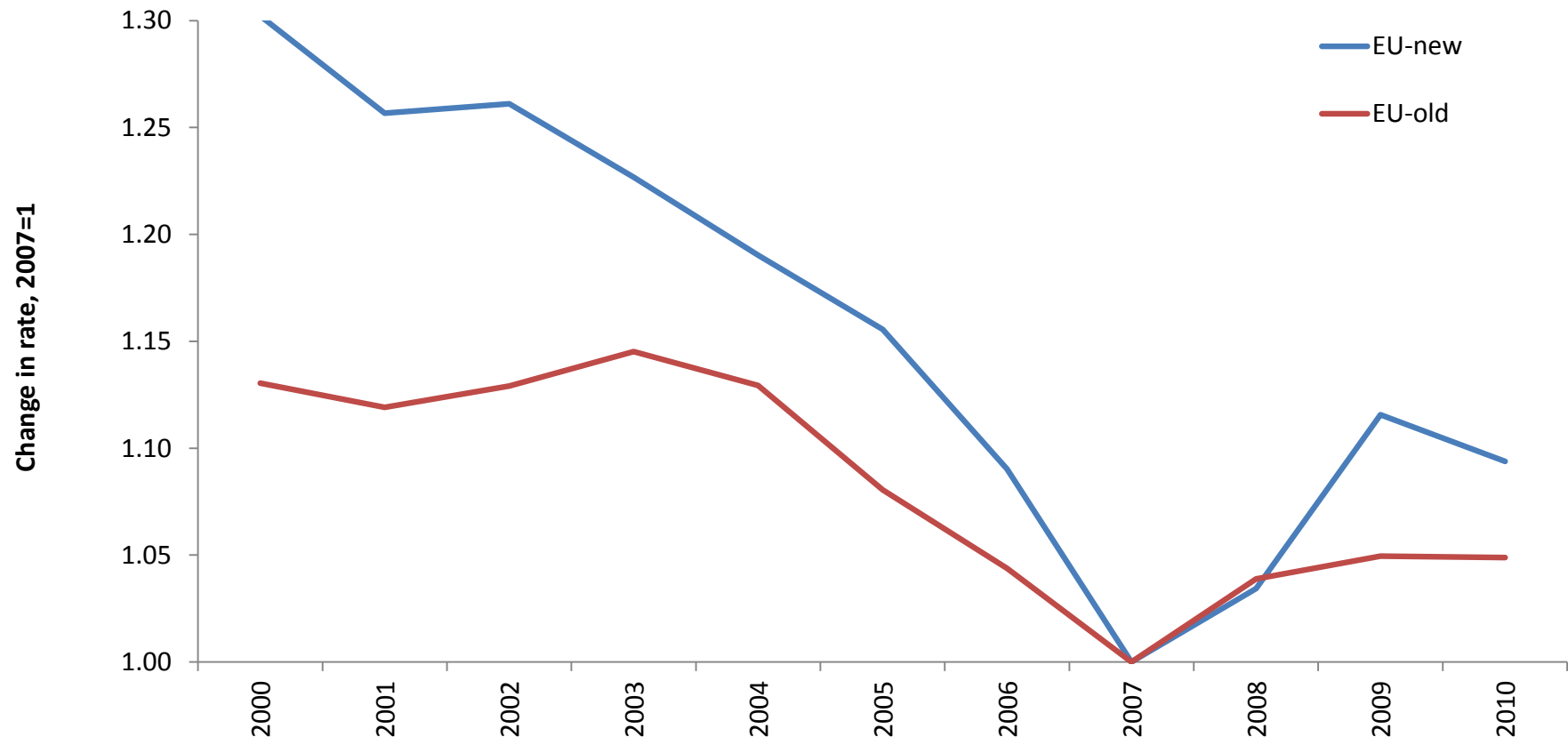
SDR all causes, all ages, per 100000

Countries	First available	Last available
1 Albania	967.88 - 1987	810.24 - 2004
2 Andorra
3 Armenia	844.84 - 1981	1045.07 - 2009
4 Austria	1206.18 - 1970	530.89 - 2011
5 Azerbaijan	1058.93 - 1981	940.4 - 2007
6 Belarus	1024.64 - 1981	1160.75 - 2009
7 Belgium	1151.54 - 1970	577.29 - 2009
8 Bosnia and Herzegovina	1099.74 - 1985	803.57 - 2011
9 Bulgaria	1089.71 - 1970	932.87 - 2011
10 Croatia	1149.04 - 1985	761.25 - 2011
11 Cyprus	684.53 - 1999	518.3 - 2011
12 Czech Republic	1299 - 1970	708.43 - 2011
13 Denmark	958.46 - 1970	597.29 - 2011
14 Estonia	1217.75 - 1981	759.72 - 2011
15 Finland	1245.42 - 1970	554.36 - 2011
16 France	970.53 - 1970	508.45 - 2009
17 Georgia	1028.36 - 1981	858.69 - 2010
18 Germany	847.31 - 1990	549.44 - 2011
19 Greece	874.75 - 1970	547.86 - 2011
20 Hungary	1252.12 - 1970	875.36 - 2011
21 Iceland	936.47 - 1971	507.38 - 2009
22 Ireland	1208.52 - 1970	553.96 - 2010
23 Israel	1102.94 - 1970	489.79 - 2010
24 Italy	1045.08 - 1970	478.12 - 2010
25 Kazakhstan	1212.62 - 1981	1270.14 - 2010
26 Kyrgyzstan	1145.51 - 1981	1195.59 - 2010
27 Latvia	1206.21 - 1980	939.19 - 2010
28 Lithuania	1070.9 - 1981	950.63 - 2010
29 Luxembourg	1265.49 - 1971	519.96 - 2011
30 Malta	1228.71 - 1970	538.6 - 2011
31 Monaco
32 Montenegro	793.09 - 1985	846.17 - 2009
33 Netherlands	962.39 - 1970	528.18 - 2011
34 Norway	925.56 - 1970	521.19 - 2011
35 Poland	1185.43 - 1970	747.68 - 2011
36 Portugal	1349.69 - 1971	546.62 - 2011
37 Republic of Moldova	1419.33 - 1981	1134.95 - 2012
38 Romania	1236.28 - 1970	948.01 - 2010
39 Russian Federation	1284.89 - 1980	1223.12 - 2010
40 San Marino	563.18 - 1995	467.82 - 2005
41 Serbia	1162.33 - 1998	930.38 - 2011
42 Slovakia	1226.78 - 1971	849.66 - 2010
43 Slovenia	1057.63 - 1985	599.67 - 2010
44 Spain	978.86 - 1970	481.45 - 2011
45 Sweden	883.87 - 1970	514.07 - 2010
46 Switzerland	987.73 - 1970	464.08 - 2010
47 Tajikistan	1050.56 - 1981	940.5 - 2005
48 FYR Macedonia	1013.2 - 1991	939.5 - 2010
49 Turkey
50 Turkmenistan	1332.92 - 1981	1331.04 - 1998
51 Ukraine	1171.97 - 1981	1102.02 - 2011
52 United Kingdom	1087.36 - 1970	553.08 - 2010
53 Uzbekistan	1063.1 - 1981	1149.19 - 2005
54 European Region	1051.57 - 1980	789.1 - 2011
55 EU	964.8 - 1980	587.01 - 2011
56 European Region before May 2004	1070.27 - 1970	574 - 2011



Impact on health – current crisis

Increase in suicides (changes in historical trends)



Change in suicide rate in the EU12 and EU15 *Adapted from Stuckler et al (2011)*



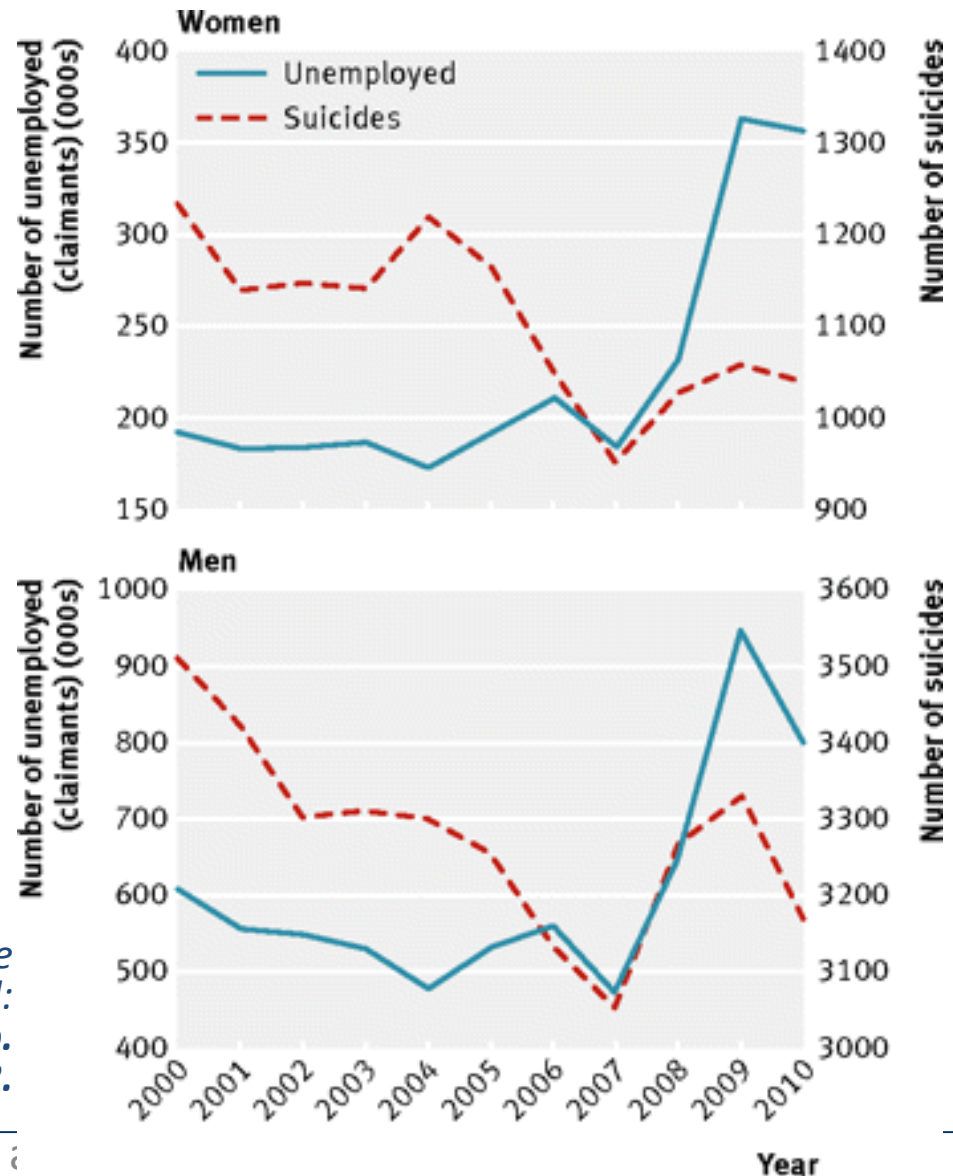
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England: 1,000 excess suicides (2008-2010)

(Barr et al, 2012)

- 846 (95% CI 818-877) for men
- 155 (95% CI 121-189) for women
- 10% increase in number of unemployed = 1.4% increase in male suicides

Barr, B., et al., *Suicides associated with the 2008-10 economic recession in England: time trend analysis. BMJ, 2012. 345: p. e5142.*

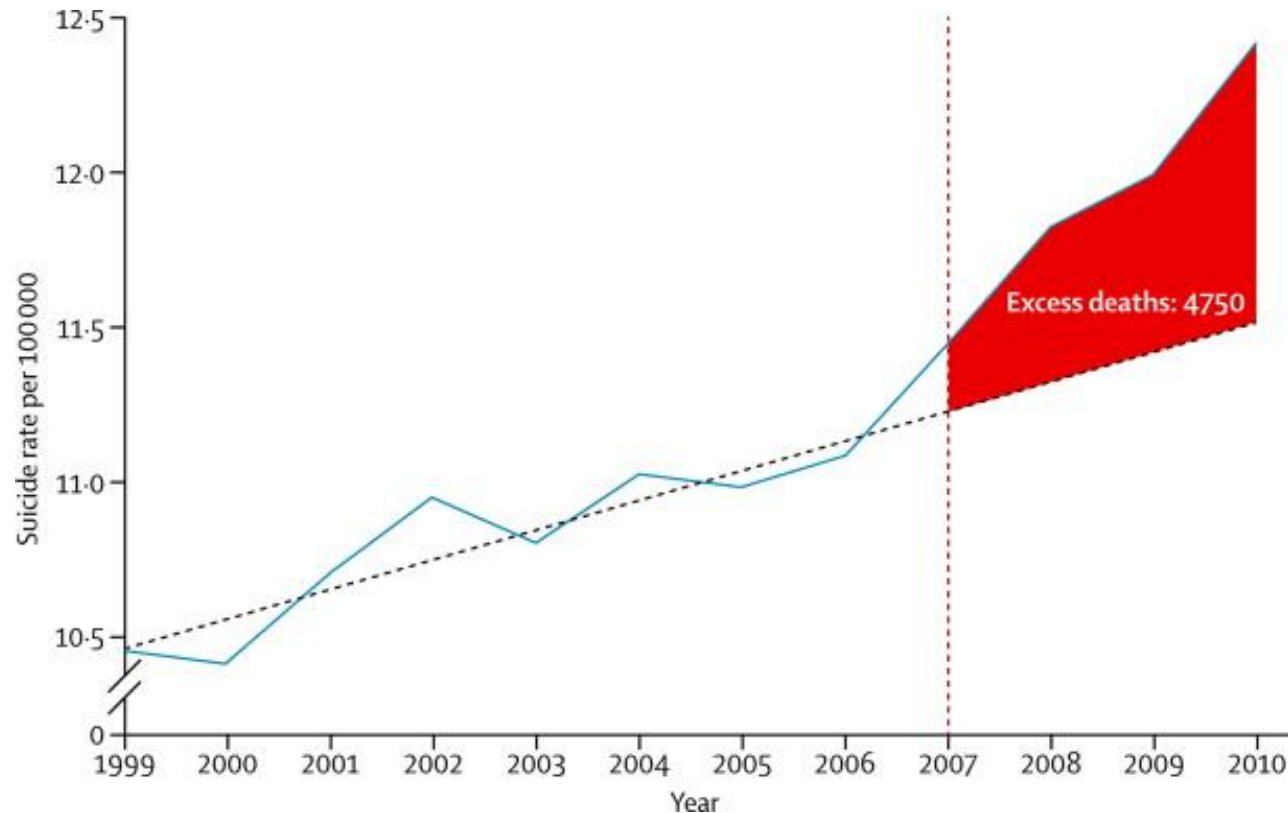




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US (Reeves et al 2012):

- 4750 (95% CI 2570-6920) excess suicides (2008-2010);
- 1% rise in unemployment → 1% increase in suicides



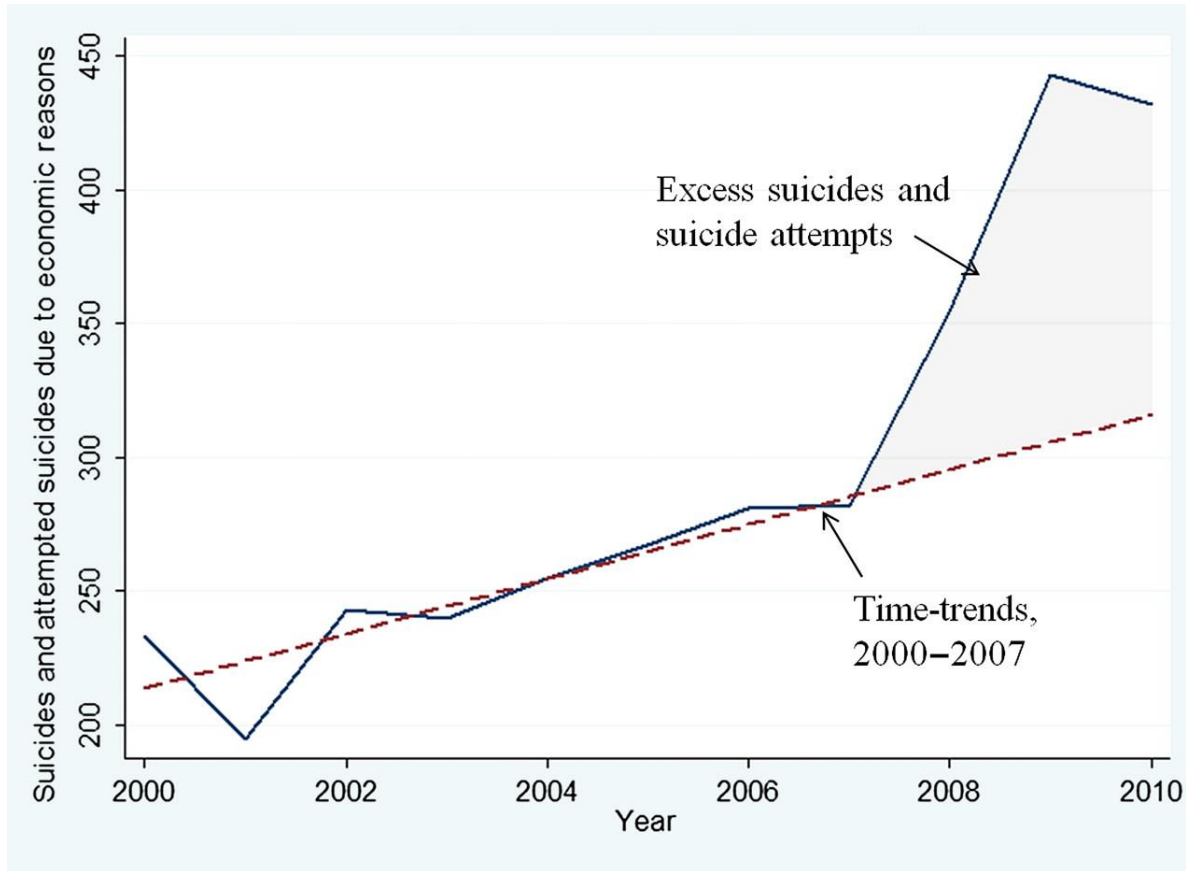
Reeves, A., et al., *Increase in state suicide rates in the USA during economic recession. Lancet, 2012. 380(9856): p. 1813-4.*



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Italy (De Vogli):

- 290 (95% CI 112-468) excess suicides and attempted suicides due to economic reasons (2008-2010)
- 1st grassroots movement on MH responding to “suicides by economic crisis”



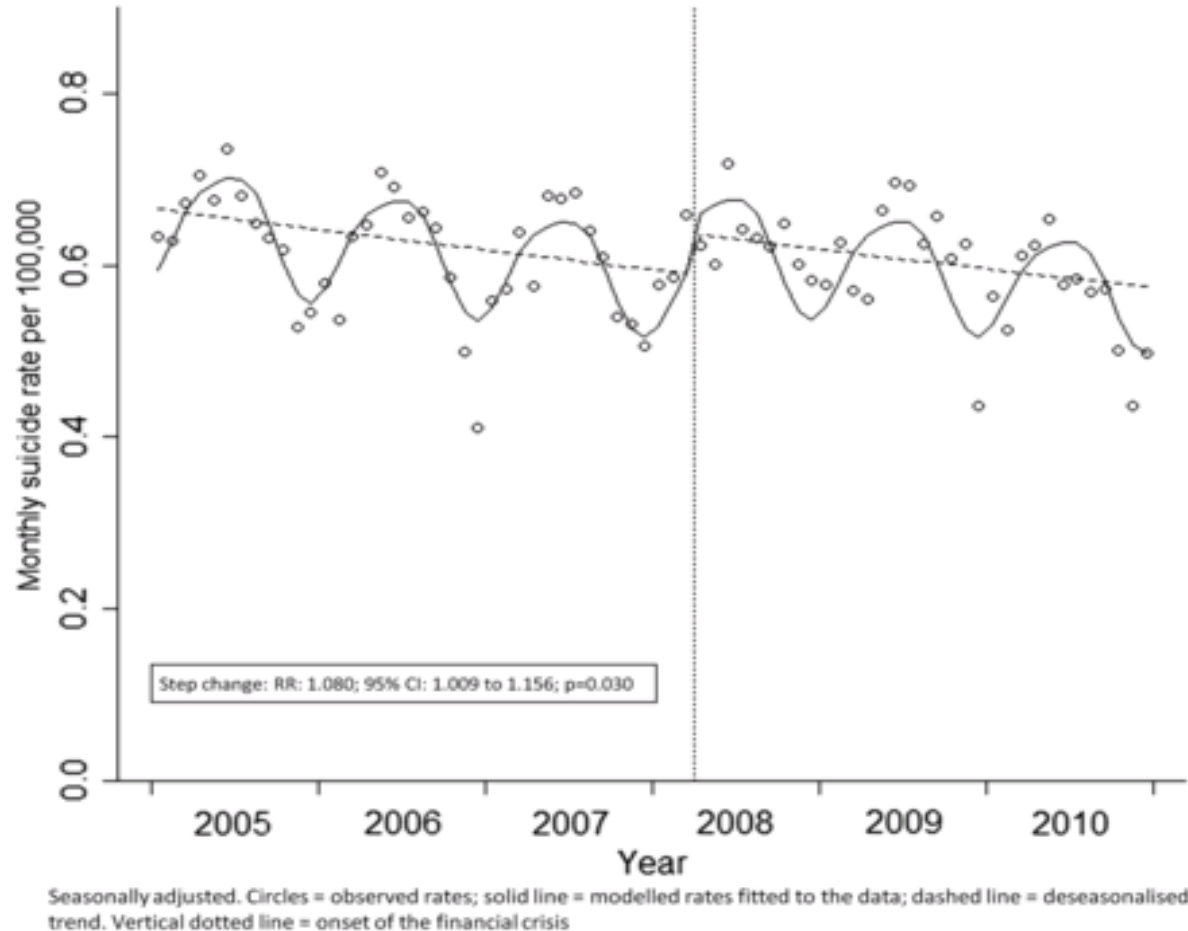
De Vogli, R., M. Marmot, and D. Stuckler, *Excess suicides and attempted suicides in Italy attributable to the great recession*. *J Epidemiol Community Health*, 2012.



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Spain (Lopez Bernal et al, 2013):

- 21 excess suicide a month, or 680 per year (2008-2010)
- 8% increase above the underlying trend (OR 95% CI 1.01-1.16)
- 30% increase in suicide helpline calls in 2012 (El Pais)



Lopez Bernal, J.A., et al., *The effect of the late 2000s financial crisis on suicides in Spain: an interrupted time-series analysis*. *Eur J Public Health*, 2013

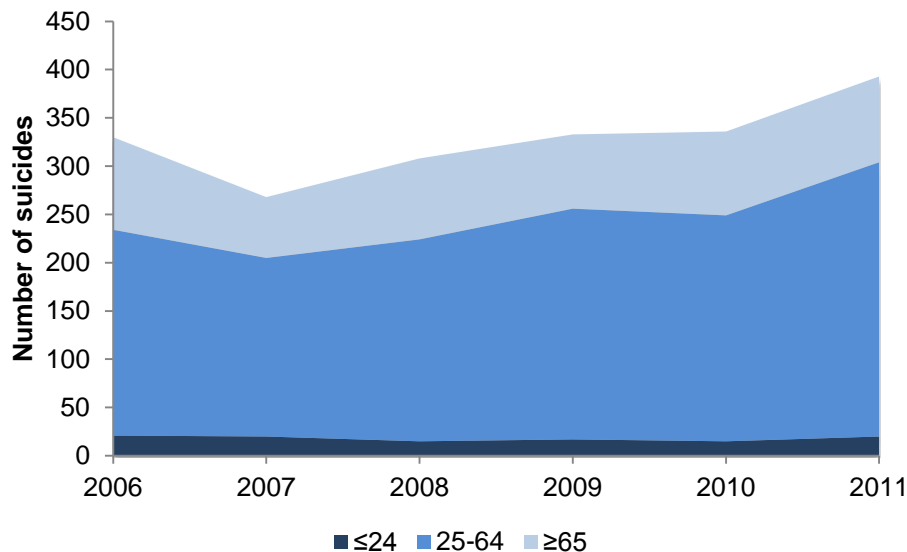


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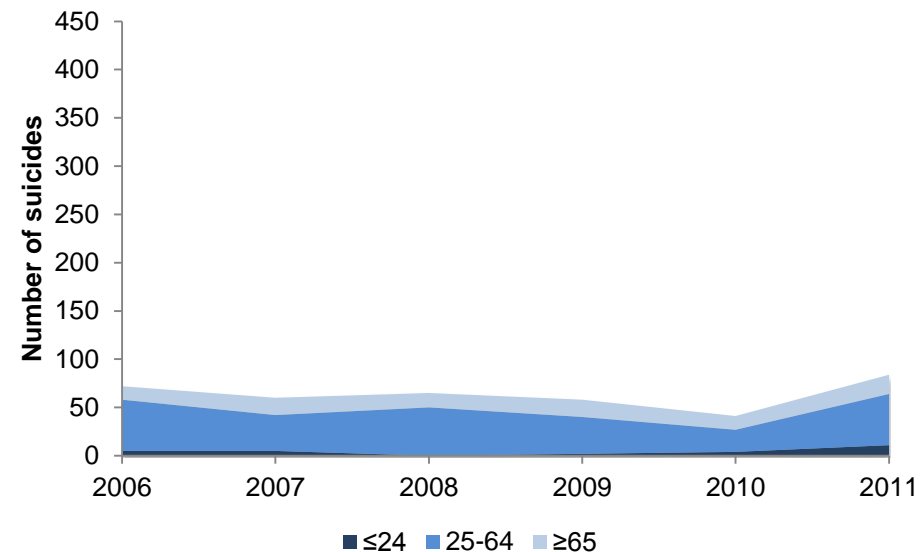
Greece:

- 45% rise in suicides from 2007 to 2011 , (Kentikelenis et al, 2013)

males



females





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Mental health has deteriorated:

- England:
 - deterioration in mental health in men between 2008-2010; could not be explained by employment status (Health Survey for England)
 - 220,000 excess mental health problems per year associated with unemployment levels; regional divide (British Household Panel Survey)



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- Spain (Gili et al, 2012):
 - Increase in disorders: 19% in major depression, 8% in anxiety, 7% in somatoform and 5% in alcohol-related disorders.
 - Risk of major depression: OR 1.7 for unemployed family member; OR 2.1 for mortgage repayment difficulties, OR 3.0 for evictions



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- Greece: 2.5 times increase in major depression between 2008 and 2011 (Economou et al, 2012)
- 29% increase in suicidal ideation and 36% increase in attempted suicide between 2009 and 2011 (Economou et al, 2013)
- 120% increase in MH service use over 3 years (Anagnostopoulos & Soumaki, 2013)
- **State funding for mental health decreased by 20% in 2011 and by further 55% in 2012.**



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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

High-burden epidemics in Greece in the era of economic crisis. Early signs of a public health tragedy

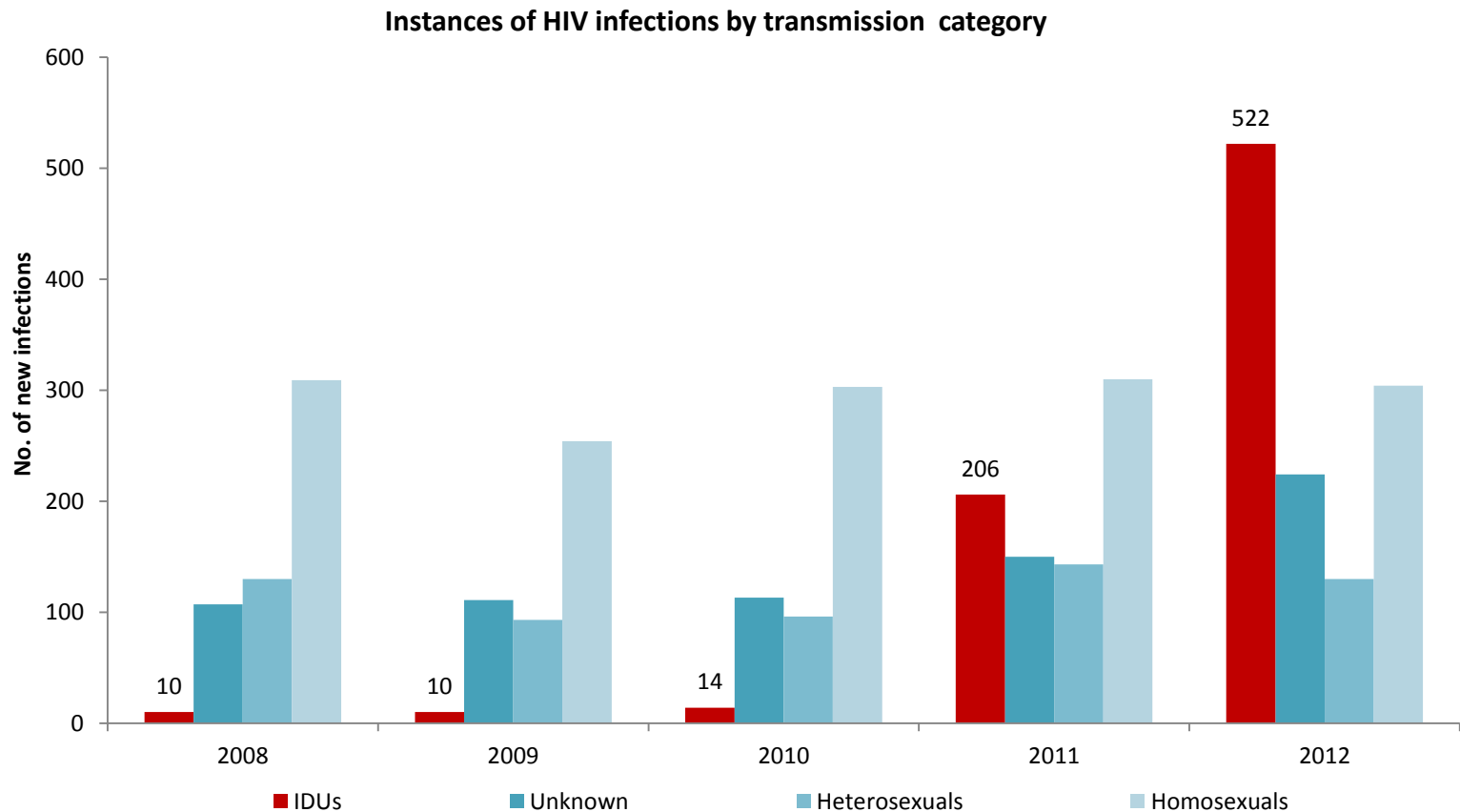
S. BONOVAS, G. NIKOLOPOULOS

Hellenic Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, Athens, Greece



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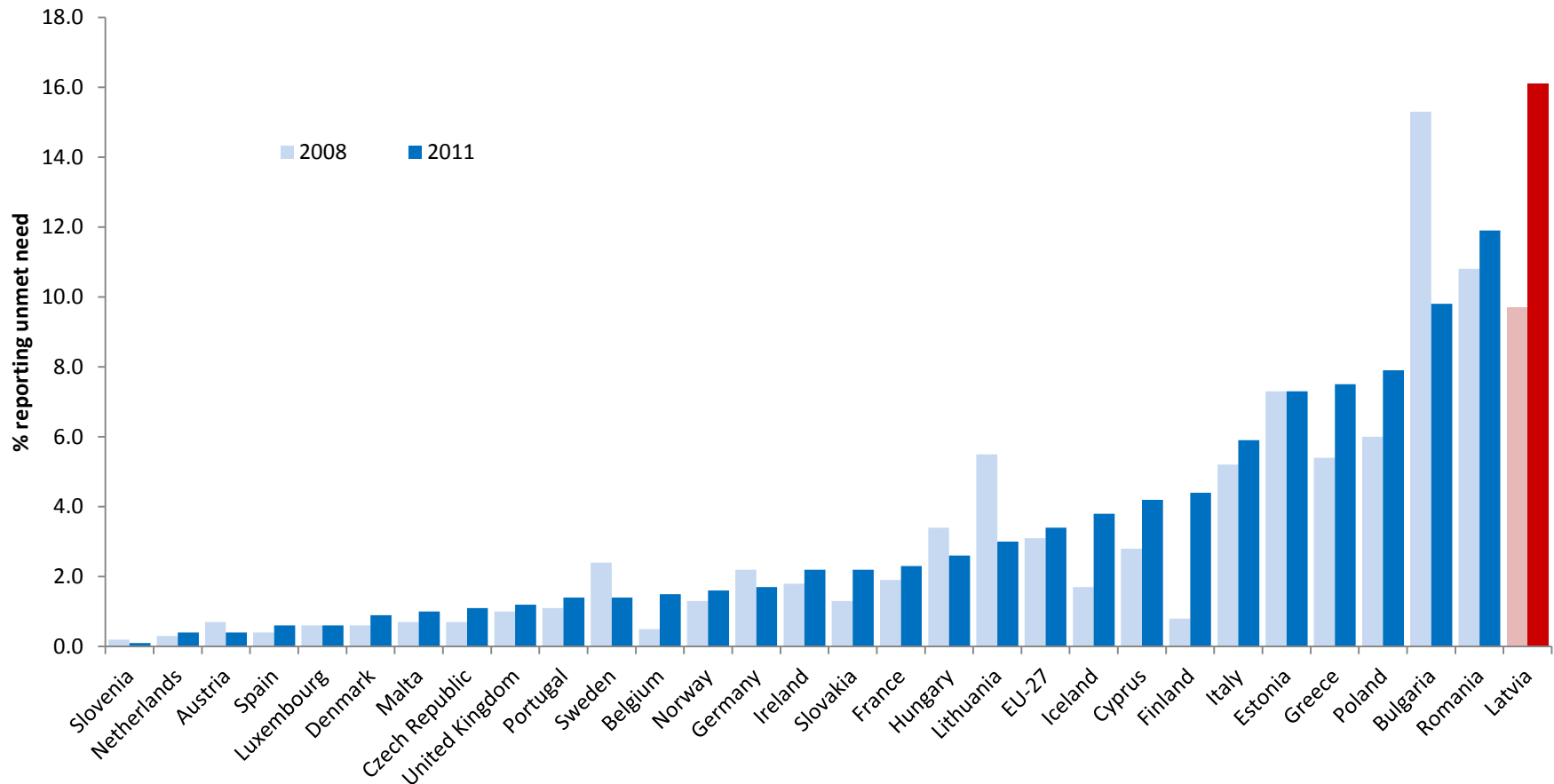
Infectious diseases- increase in HIV





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Unmet medical need (%) (EU-SILC)





Impact on health – current crisis

Unmet need in Greece
compared to 2007:

- 2009: OR = 1.15*
- 2011: OR = 1.47*

Main reasons: cost, waiting
lists, and distance

* $P < 0.05$

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The Lancet, [Volume 378, Issue 9801](#), Pages 1457 - 1458, 22 October 2011
doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(11)61556-0 [Cite or Link Using DOI](#) [? Cite or Link Using DOI](#)

Published Online: 10 October 2011

Health effects of financial crisis: omens of a Greek tragedy

[Alexander Kentikelenis](#) , [Marina Karanikolos](#) , [Irene Papanicolas](#) , [Sanjay Basu](#) , [Martin McKee](#) , [David Stuckler](#)  

Greece has been affected more by the financial turmoil beginning in 2007 than any other European country. 15 years of consecutive growth in the Greek economy have reversed. In adults, unemployment has risen from 6.6% in May, 2008, to



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Is there an alternative?





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Some good news:

- Reduction in road traffic deaths
- Improvements in lifestyle (smoking and alcohol consumption), but...
 - ... increase in binge drinking
 - ... increase in smoking among unemployed



Key messages

- Austerity measures are visible and had severe impact on health, particularly mental health
- Social safety nets (formal and informal) can mitigate the impact on health
- Austerity measures, eg cost-cutting or increase in user charges, can exacerbate the impact by reducing access to and quality of care
- Differing policy responses to similar shocks create different health outcomes – potential for future research on policy impact and resilience



Thank you!

Monitoring the impact of crisis on health

European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies

Andalusian School of Public Health - EASP

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This web monitor is an evidence resource engine dedicated to monitoring the effects of the financial crisis on health and health systems. [Read more...](#)

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