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Review

# WHO European review of social determinants of health and the health divide

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## Summary

The European region has seen remarkable health gains in those populations that have experienced progressive improvements in the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, and work. However, inequities, both between and within countries, persist. The review reported here, of inequities in health between and within countries across the 53 Member States of the WHO European region, was commissioned to support the development of the new health policy framework for Europe: Health 2020. Much more is understood now about the extent, and social causes, of these inequities, particularly since the publication in 2008 of the report of the Commission on Social Determinants of Health. The European review builds on the global evidence and recommends policies to ensure that progress can be made in reducing health inequities and the health divide

across all countries, including those with low incomes. Action is needed“ on the social determinants of health, across the life course, and in wider social and economic spheres“to achieve greater health equity and protect future generations.



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