



Housing, health and equity

Monika Kosinska

Secretary General

European Public Health Alliance



Introduction

“Social injustice is killing people on a grand scale”

Sir Michael Marmot

WHO Commission on Social Determinants of Health

Good health

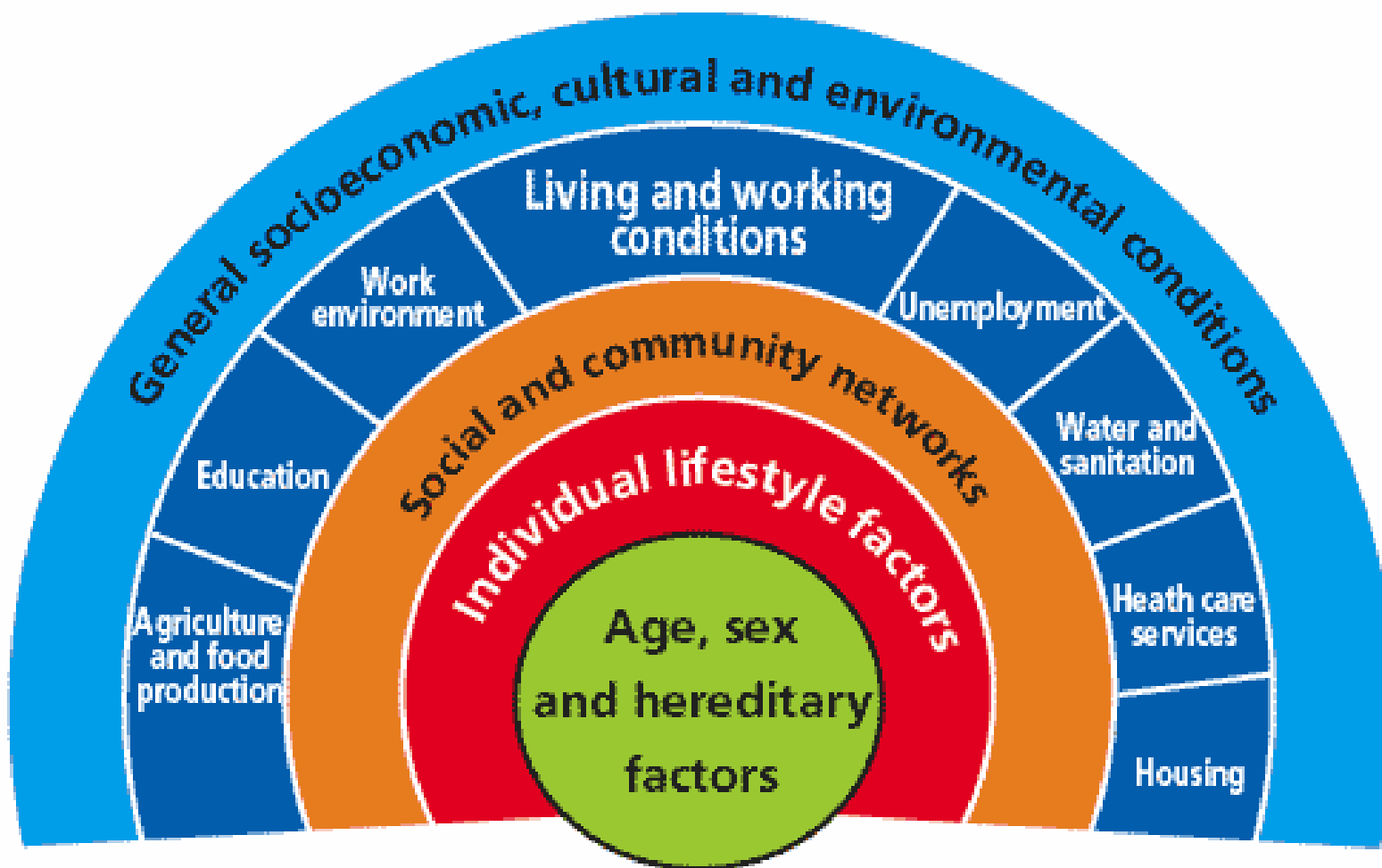
Good food

Part of a community

Quality
housing

Quality
employment

Determinants of health

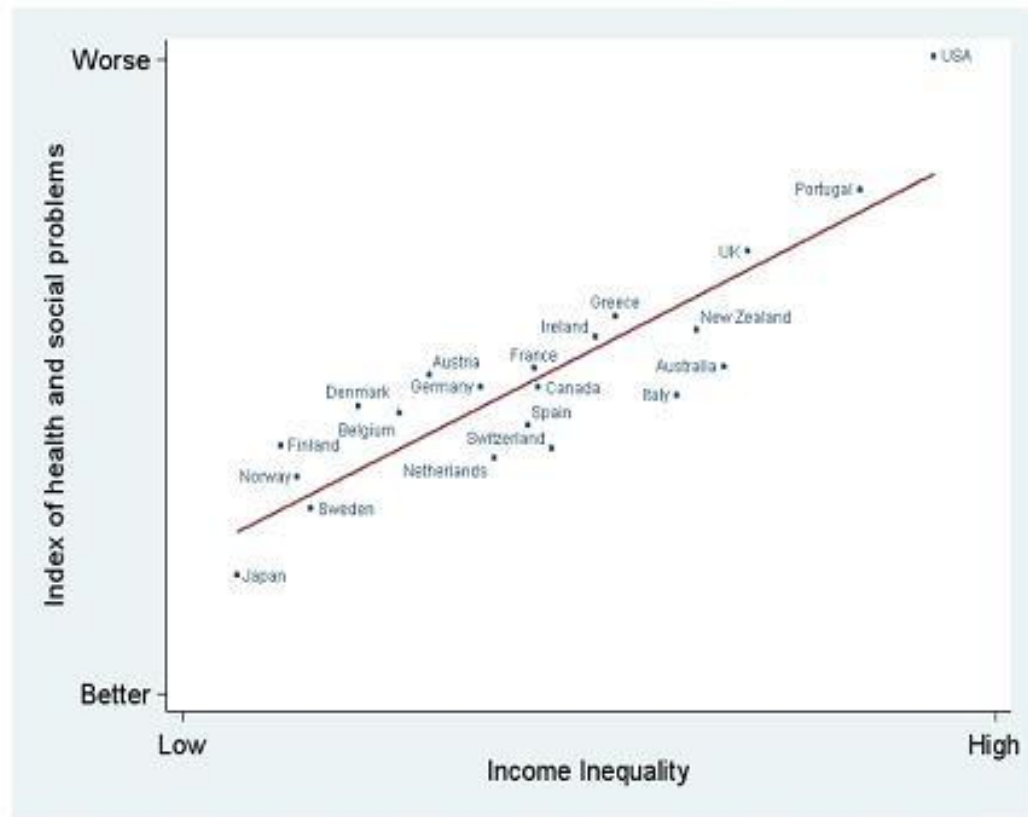


Gradient of inequality

Health and Social Problems are Worse in More Unequal Countries

Index of:

- Life expectancy
- Math & Literacy
- Infant mortality
- Homicides
- Imprisonment
- Teenage births
- Trust
- Obesity
- Mental illness – incl. drug & alcohol addiction
- Social mobility



Source: Wilkinson & Pickett, *The Spirit Level* (2009)

www.equalitytrust.org.uk

Equality Trust



Determinants of health

- Shift from medicine to prevention
- Health of individuals and communities is symbiotic
- Health is determined by wide range of social, economic and environmental factors
- Socio economic gradient of health



Causes of illhealth

- Key are living standards of poor households
- Quality housing can make big difference
 - Well designed housing
 - Size
 - Built quality
 - Part of community planning
 - Services
 - Green spaces
 - Food



Housing policies for better health

- **Policies to improve the availability of social housing**, within a framework of environmental improvement, planning and design, which takes into account social networks, and access to goods and services;



Housing policies for health (2)

- Policies which improve housing provision and access to health care, for both officially and unofficially homeless people;
- Policies which aim to improve the quality
- of housing, specifically:
 - improving insulation and heating systems in new and existing buildings, in order to further reduce fuel poverty;



Housing policies for health (3)

- Regulations on space and amenity, to reduce accidents in the home.
- Policies which reduce the fear of crime and violence, and create a safe environment for people to live in



Conclusions

- **Good housing for all is essential to healthy individuals and communities**
- Greater cooperation to foster synergies between the health and house sector
- Good housing for those who suffer from inequalities will benefit all of society
- Good housing saves costs, lives and contributes to health and well being