Inequalities in Health: Interactive Atlases for 280 Regions in Europe

Measuring social health inequalities
Conceptual framework for analysis and action on the social determinants of health

Includes four domains of the overall concept “social determinants of health inequalities”:

- **Socioeconomic political context**.
- **Social stratification** (variations in the structural social determinants or distal causes of health inequalities).
- **Intermediary factors** (variations in proximal determinants of health, i.e. exposures, vulnerabilities)
- **Outcomes in health** (variations in health status and well-being) due to above groups of influences

Disposable income and amenable mortality: measuring the role of social inequalities
Social health inequalities measurement: selection of stratifiers

- SE indicators used in the descriptive and correlation analysis atlas
  - GDP pc (current, PPS)
  - Basic primary income
  - Disposable household income
  - Pre-primary and lower secondary education
  - Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education
  - Tertiary education
  - Unemployment
  - Long-term unemployment
  - Infant mortality
Social health inequalities: how to measure

• Issues for selecting the appropriate measures
  – A large number of measures is available
  – Requirements
    • Simple
    • More complex ones
  – Comparisons
    • Based on extreme groups
    • Whole distributions
  – Data requirements
    • Individual or aggregated

– Targeting the user
– Using publicly available data
– Useful for setting realistic/achievable targets

=> For this project, priority was the practicality of using simple measures to analyse publicly available aggregated data
Social stratifiers used for determining health inequalities

- **Selected indicators** – expressing different aspects of health inequalities
  - *Income of households* - Disposable income, net - Purchasing power standard based on final consumption per inhabitant
  - *Percentage of population by highest level of education attained* - Pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education - levels 0-2 (ISCED 1997) - Both sexes - Between 25 and 64 years
  - *Percentage of population by highest level of education attained* - Tertiary education - levels 5-6 (ISCED 1997) - Both sexes - Between 25 and 64 years
  - *Unemployment rates* age 25 years and over - Both sexes
  - *Long-term unemployment* (12 months and more) - Long-term unemployment rate (on total unemployment), and,
  - *Infant mortality rate* (in the regional context, it has been shown to be a good proxy of the overall level of welfare or deprivation

- **Organised into thematic equity profiles**
  - Amenable mortality and child health
Social Health Inequalities: Measurement

- **Measurement Process**
  - Conform socioeconomic groups (based on quintiles)
  - Estimate average health status for groups
  - Determine target level ("benchmark")
  - Compare target and interest groups with absolute and relative differences

- **Example: Amenable mortality, all causes**
  - Target area difference = 56.1 deaths per 100 000 pop.
  - Target area ratio = 2.23
Social Health Inequalities Measurement

- Example: Life expectancy at birth, both sexes
  - Target area difference = 5.5 years
  - Target area ratio = 1.07
Live presentation
Atlas of Social Health Inequalities