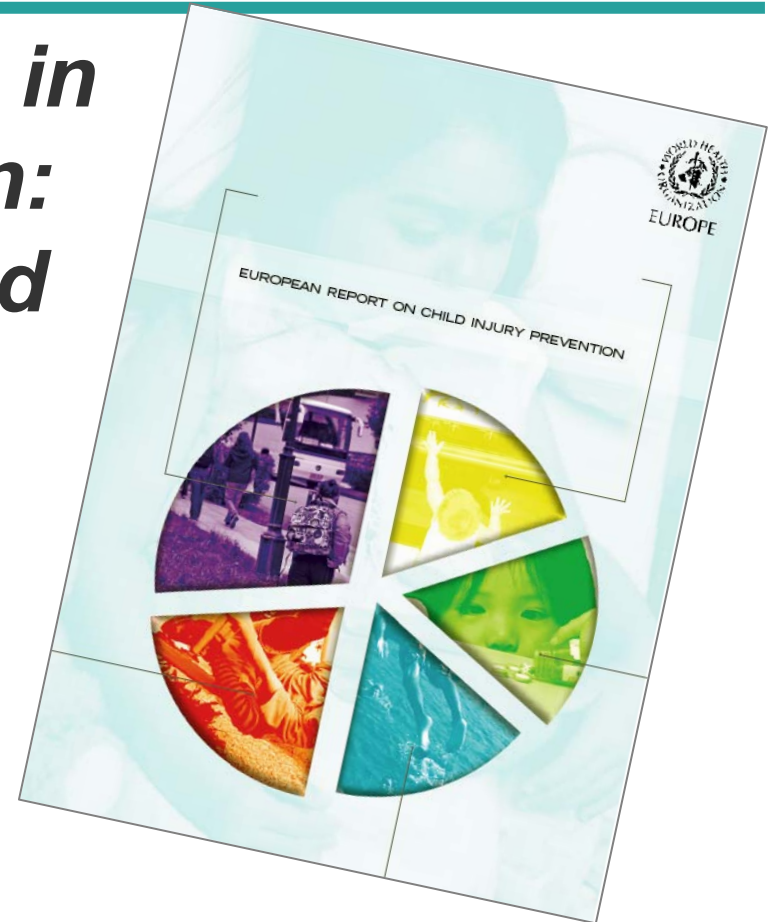


# ***Unintentional injuries in the European Region: Promoting safety and equity***

**Francesca Racioppi  
Dinesh Sethi**

WHO Regional Office for Europe



# In this presentation:

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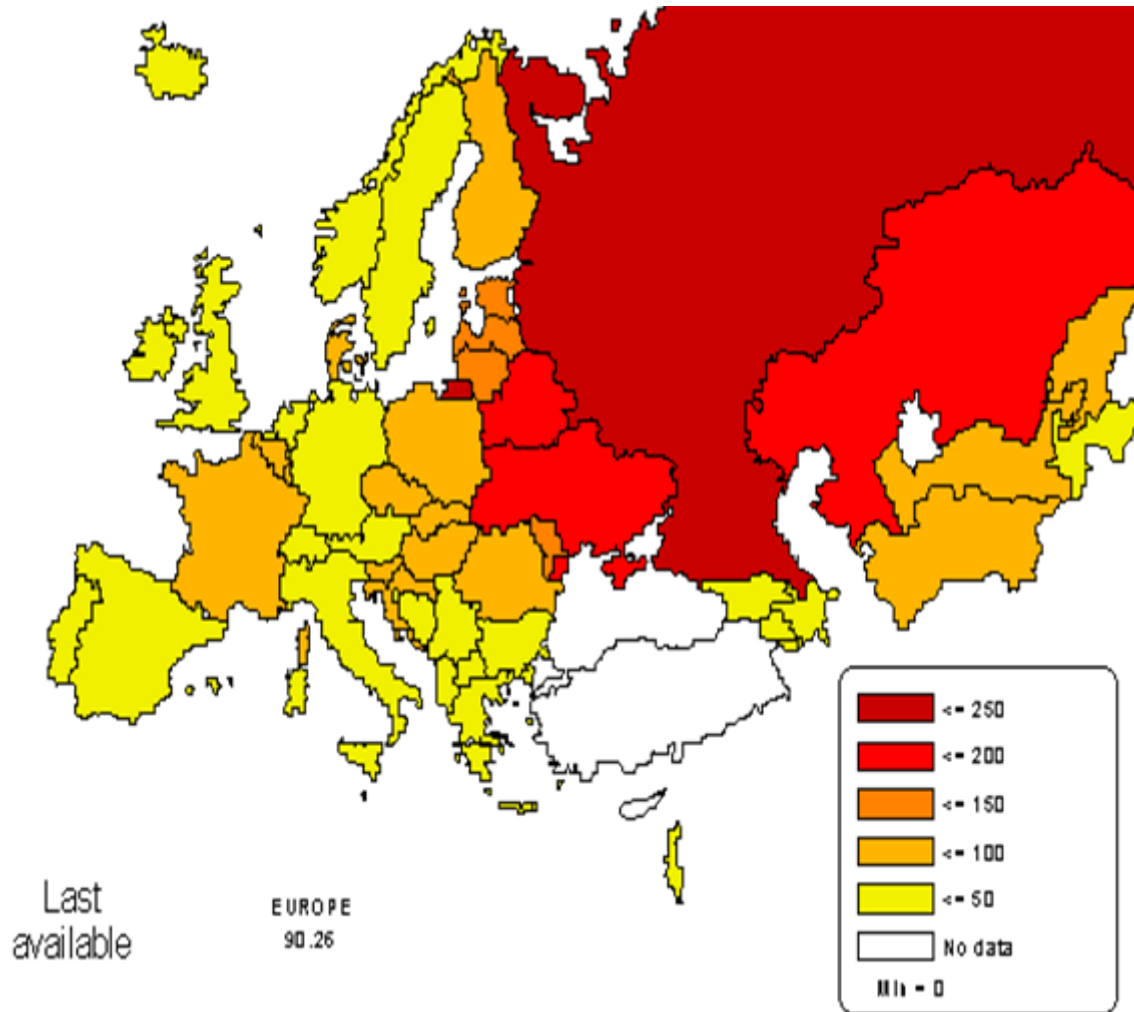
- Overview of injuries in Europe
- Unintentional injuries in children
  - Burden
  - A major source of inequities
- The response

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# Global and European overview

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# Nowhere in the world is the difference between poorer and wealthier countries in mortality from injury as high as in Europe



People in LMIC are 4 times more likely to die from injuries than people in HIC.

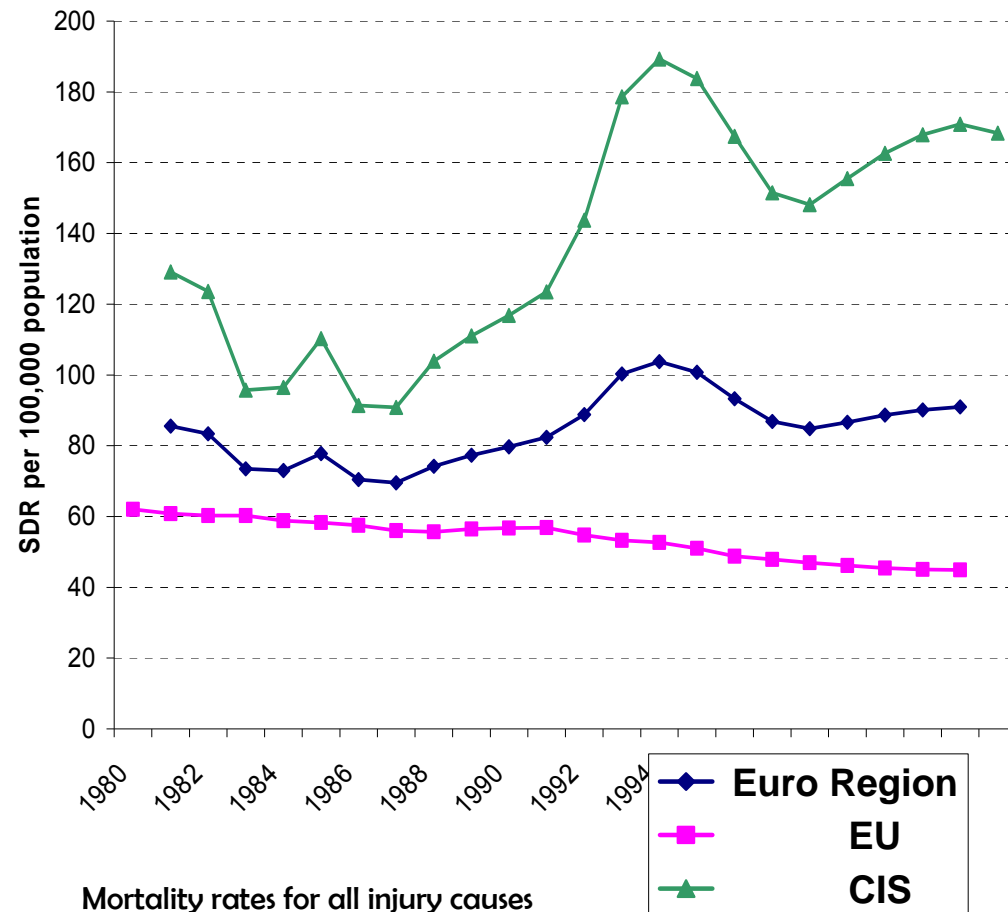
Achievements of HIC indicates that closing this gap IS possible.

One third of the injuries are due to violence.

Standardized mortality rate from all injuries in the WHO European Region for both sexes, 2002

# If nothing is done:

- The gap between CIS and EU will continue to widen
- Opportunity to transfer experience from other parts of the Region will be lost
- Opportunity to save 500,000 lives will be lost

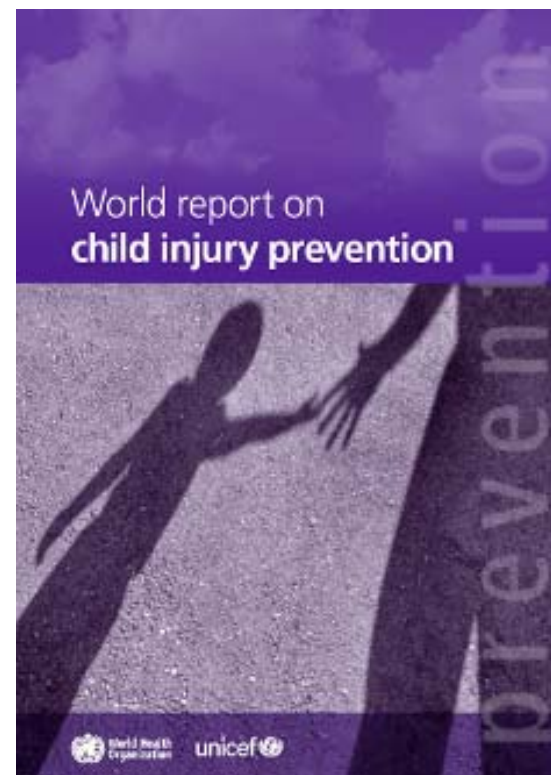


Mortality rates for all injury causes in the European Region, 2002  
(Source: HFA-MDB)

- Inequalities in injuries within and between countries will worsen

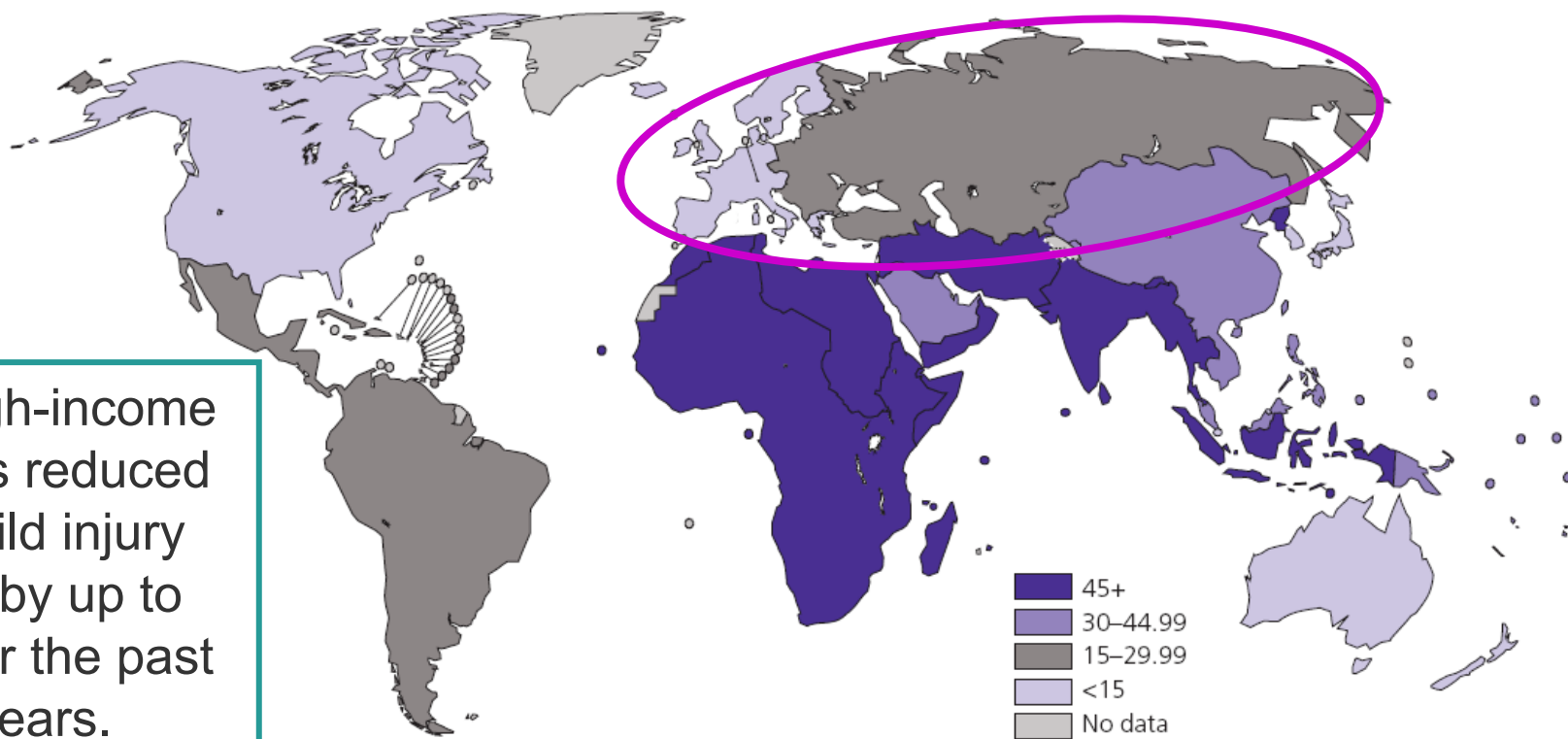
# The world report is the first comprehensive global assessment of childhood unintentional injuries

- Unintentional injuries are the leading cause of childhood death over 9 years old
- 830 000 children die yearly and tens of millions suffer lifelong disabilities
- 95% of child injuries occur in developing countries
- Top five causes of injury deaths are:
  - **road crashes** - killing 260 000 children a year.
  - **drowning** - killing more than 175 000 children a year.
  - **burns** - killing nearly 96 000 children a year.
  - **falls** – killing nearly 47 000 children every year.
  - **poisoning** – killing over 45 000 children each year.



# At least 1000 lives a day could be saved globally

Rate of unintentional injuries per 100 000 children,<sup>a</sup> by WHO region and country income level, world, 2004



Many high-income countries reduced their child injury deaths by up to 50% over the past 30 years.

Africa		Americas		South-East Asia	Europe		Eastern Mediterranean		Western Pacific	
LMIC	HIC	LMIC	LMIC	LMIC	HIC	LMIC	HIC	LMIC	HIC	LMIC
53.1	14.4	21.8	49.0	7.9	25.4	41.6	45.7	7.8	33.8	

<sup>a</sup> These data refer to those under the age of 20 years  
HIC=high-income countries; LMIC=low-income and middle-income countries

Source: The global burden of disease: 2004 update



# In Europe, unintentional injuries are the leading threat for children and teenagers

- 42 000 deaths in children and adolescents 0–19 years (115 deaths a day)
- Huge drain on health and societal resources:
  - 5 million estimated annual hospital admissions
  - 70 million emergency department attendances in the Region

**Table 2.1**

**Ranking of 15 leading causes of death in people aged 0–19 years in the WHO European Region, 2004**

Rank	Cause of death
1	Perinatal causes
2	Lower respiratory infections
3	Diarrhoeal diseases
4	Congenital anomalies
5	Road traffic injuries
6	Self-inflicted injuries
7	Meningitis
8	Drowning
9	Leukaemia
10	Violence
11	Upper respiratory infections
12	Poisoning
13	Endocrine disorders
14	HIV/AIDS
15	Epilepsy

Source: The global burden of disease: 2004 update



# Why are children are particularly at risk?

- Children are not just little adults.
- They live in a world built for adults.
- Strong association between injuries and a child's:
  - age
  - developmental stage
  - interaction with the world
  - activities



# Children and inequalities



# Injuries are the leading cause of inequality in child death in Europe between and within countries



Photo: (c) T. Divakova

- 5 out of 6 of child injury deaths are in poorer countries.
- There is up to an 8-fold difference between countries with the highest and lowest injury death rates.
- Death rates in the Commonwealth of Independent States are 3 times those in the European Union.
- Even in high-income countries, unintentional injuries account for 40% of all child deaths.
- Within countries, death rates can vary as much as 9 times.

# Children living in unsafe environments and in poverty are five times more likely to die from injuries than their richer peers

- Exposed to fast traffic, lack of safe areas to play, crowded homes with unsafe structures
- Poorer families may not be able to afford safety equipment
- Supervision may be difficult in families with a single parent, or affected by alcohol and drug abuse
- Once injured, poorer children may have less access to high-quality medical and rehabilitation services



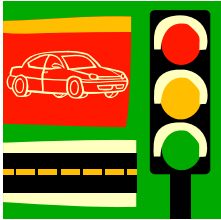
Photo: (c) N. Di Tanno



Photo: (c) N. Di Tanno

# The environment influences the three domains of prevention...

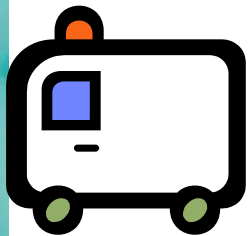
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- Total exposure to sources of danger



- Opportunities for protection



- Consequences of injuries

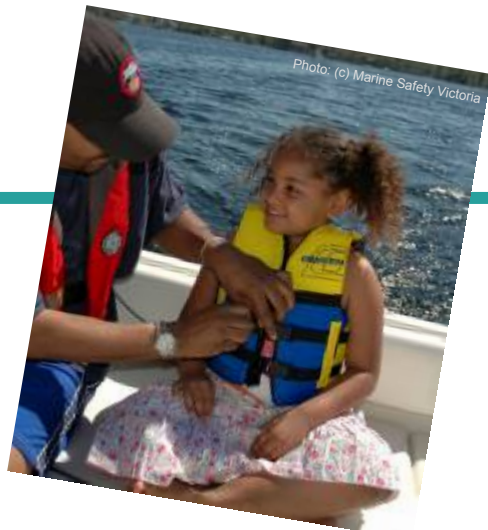
# Huge opportunities to reduce the gap

If all countries reached the same death rates as the lowest in the Region, Europe could potentially prevent 3 out of 4 children's injury deaths.

- Europe has some of the safest countries in the world.
- These countries have:
  - embraced safety as a societal responsibility;
  - systematically focused on providing safe environments; and
  - developed evidence-based programmes.
- Their experience is a resource for the whole Region and needs to be shared.



# The winning strategy





# Child injuries are preventable and measures are cost-effective

- Report describes a large number of effective interventions
- Some give very good value for money
- There is a huge potential for prevention by addressing underlying risks and exposures

**Table 8.2**

**Financial savings from selected injury prevention interventions**

Expenditure of €1 each	Savings (€)
Smoke alarms	69.0
Car child restraints	29.0
Bicycle helmets	29.0
Motorcycle helmets	16.0
Upgraded marked pedestrian crossings	14.0
Roadside lighting	10.7
Guardrails on roadsides	10.4
Prevention counselling by paediatricians	10.0
Area-wide speed and traffic management	9.7
Poison control centres	7.0
Daytime running lights (normal bulbs)	4.4
Pedestrian bridges or underpasses	2.5

Sources: Data from *Cost effective EU transport safety measures* , Miller & Lever and Cost-benefit analysis of measures for vulnerable road users

# Reproducing safety strategies relevant to adults will not protect sufficiently children

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- Prevention programmes should take into account the vulnerability of children and be multisectoral
- The most successful have been those that combine:
  - legislation, regulation and enforcement;
  - environmental modification;
  - product modification;
  - education and skill development; and
  - appropriate emergency medical care.



**Preventing  
injuries  
vs.  
preventing  
inequality in  
injuries**

# Two different lines of thought

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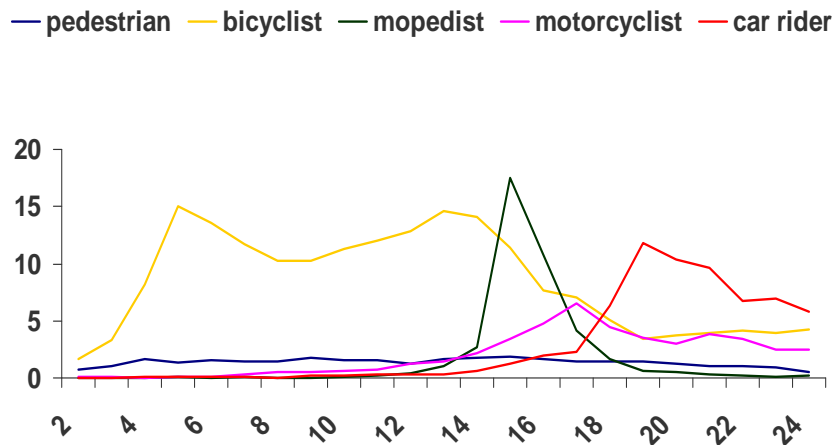


**Safety-for-all  
strategies**



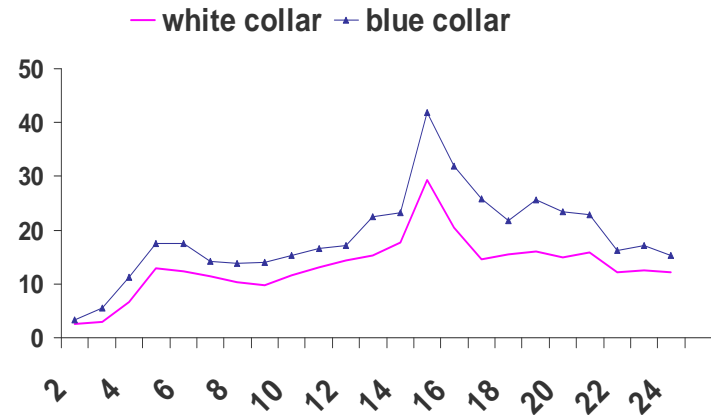
**Targeted  
strategies**

## Prevention of injuries



## Risk factors

## Reduction of inequalities



## Factors of inequalities

# Safety-for-all strategies



Legislation, regulation,  
enforcement

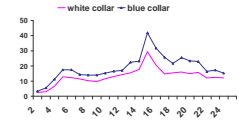


Community-based programmes



Home safety education and  
home visitation programmes

# Addressing mechanisms of health inequalities



- Differential consequences
- Differential vulnerability
- Differential exposure
- Differential social mobility



# Health systems can play a central role in this new approach

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1. Integrate child injury into a **comprehensive approach** to child health and development.
2. Develop and implement a **child injury prevention policy** and a plan of action.
3. Implement **specific actions** to prevent and control child injuries.
4. Strengthen **health services** to address child injuries.
5. Build **capacity** and exchange **best practice**.
6. Enhance the quality and type of **data** for child injury prevention.
7. Define priorities for **research**.
8. Raise awareness and target **investments** in child injury prevention.
9. Address **inequity** in child injury.

# Framework for delivery

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- Policy
  - WHA road safety and health and implementing recommendations of WRVH;
  - RC55/R9 on prevention of injuries
  - EU Recommendation on injury prevention
  - National policies
- Network of health ministry focal persons
- Bilateral and multilateral collaborations
- World and European reports and implementation
- Implementation and monitoring

# Preventing injury is a priority of Europe's policy agenda

- The 2004 WHO Children's Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe identifies injuries as one of the leading causes of preventable death from environmental factors
- In 2005, a resolution of WHO Regional Committee for Europe urged countries to reduce death and disability from this cause
- In 2007, the Council of the European Union officially adopted the Council Recommendation on the prevention of injuries and promotion of safety
- In 2010, the WHO Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health will define the future agenda of Europe on "protecting children's health in a changing environment".



# In conclusion:

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- Unintentional injuries remain a leading cause of death and disability in Europe
- Inequalities exist between and within countries
  - Children are particularly vulnerable
- Health systems can play a leading role in addressing injuries
- Effective strategies are available to reduce inequities in injury
- Evidence base of what works summarised in European and World Reports

# Further information on the WHO/Europe website

The screenshot displays the WHO/Europe website interface. At the top left is the WHO logo and the text 'World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe'. On the top right, there are language options: English, Français, Deutsch, and Русский, along with a link for 'About languages'. A search bar is located in the top right corner. Below the header is a navigation menu with tabs for 'Country information', 'Health topics', 'Media centre', 'Data and publications', 'About WHO', and 'Programmes and projects'. The main content area is titled 'Violence and injury prevention' and includes a breadcrumb trail: 'Programmes and projects > Violence and injury prevention > European report on child injury prevention'. A left-hand sidebar contains a list of menu items: Home, Violence, Road traffic injuries, Other injury topics, Child injuries and violence, Disability and rehabilitation, Country information, Assistance to countries, Publications, Environment and health site, Links, Contacts, and Search VIP site. The main content area features the title 'European report on child injury prevention' and an 'Overview' section. This section states: 'This new report: provides a comprehensive assessment of unintentional injuries in European children; identifies evidence-based solutions to prevent them; and calls for greater commitment and action by policy makers and practitioners to ensure equal safety.' To the right of this text is a circular graphic with five colored segments (purple, yellow, green, red, blue) and the text 'EUROPEAN REPORT ON CHILD INJURY PREVENTION'. Below the overview, there is a paragraph: 'The European report is companion to the WHO-UNICEF World report on child injury prevention.' Further down, the 'Main messages from the European report' section lists three bullet points: 'Unintentional injuries are the leading threat for children and teenagers in the European Region', 'Poor children most at risk', and 'Prevention could save three out of four lives'. On the right side of the page, there is a sidebar with a title 'European report on child injury prevention' and a list of links: Overview, Press materials (with sub-links for Press release, fact sheet, presentation), 10 key facts, The five leading killers, Why poor children are most at risk, Measures that can make a difference, The policy agenda, and Success stories (with sub-link for Examples of policies that worked). At the bottom of the page, there is a link: 'European report on child injury prevention (2008)'. The browser's address bar at the bottom shows 'Done' and 'Trusted sites'.

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Country information Health topics Media centre Data and publications About WHO Programmes and projects

Programmes and projects > Violence and injury prevention > European report on child injury prevention

## Violence and injury prevention

- Home
- Violence
- Road traffic injuries
- Other injury topics
- Child injuries and violence
- Disability and rehabilitation
- Country information
- Assistance to countries
- Publications
- Environment and health site
- Links
- Contacts
- Search VIP site

### European report on child injury prevention

#### Overview

This new report:

- provides a comprehensive assessment of unintentional injuries in European children;
- identifies evidence-based solutions to prevent them; and
- calls for greater commitment and action by policy makers and practitioners to ensure equal safety.



The European report is companion to the WHO-UNICEF *World report on child injury prevention*.

#### Main messages from the European report

- Unintentional injuries are the leading threat for children and teenagers in the European Region
- Poor children most at risk
- Prevention could save three out of four lives

▶ [European report on child injury prevention \(2008\)](#)

#### European report on child injury prevention

- ▶ [Overview](#)
- [Press materials](#)  
Press release, fact sheet, presentation
- [10 key facts](#)
- [The five leading killers](#)
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Done Trusted sites

<http://www.euro.who.int/violenceinjury>