

NATIONALER
AKTIONSPLAN
GESUNDHEITSKOMPETENZ

The German National Action Plan on Health Literacy – empirical base, development and implementation

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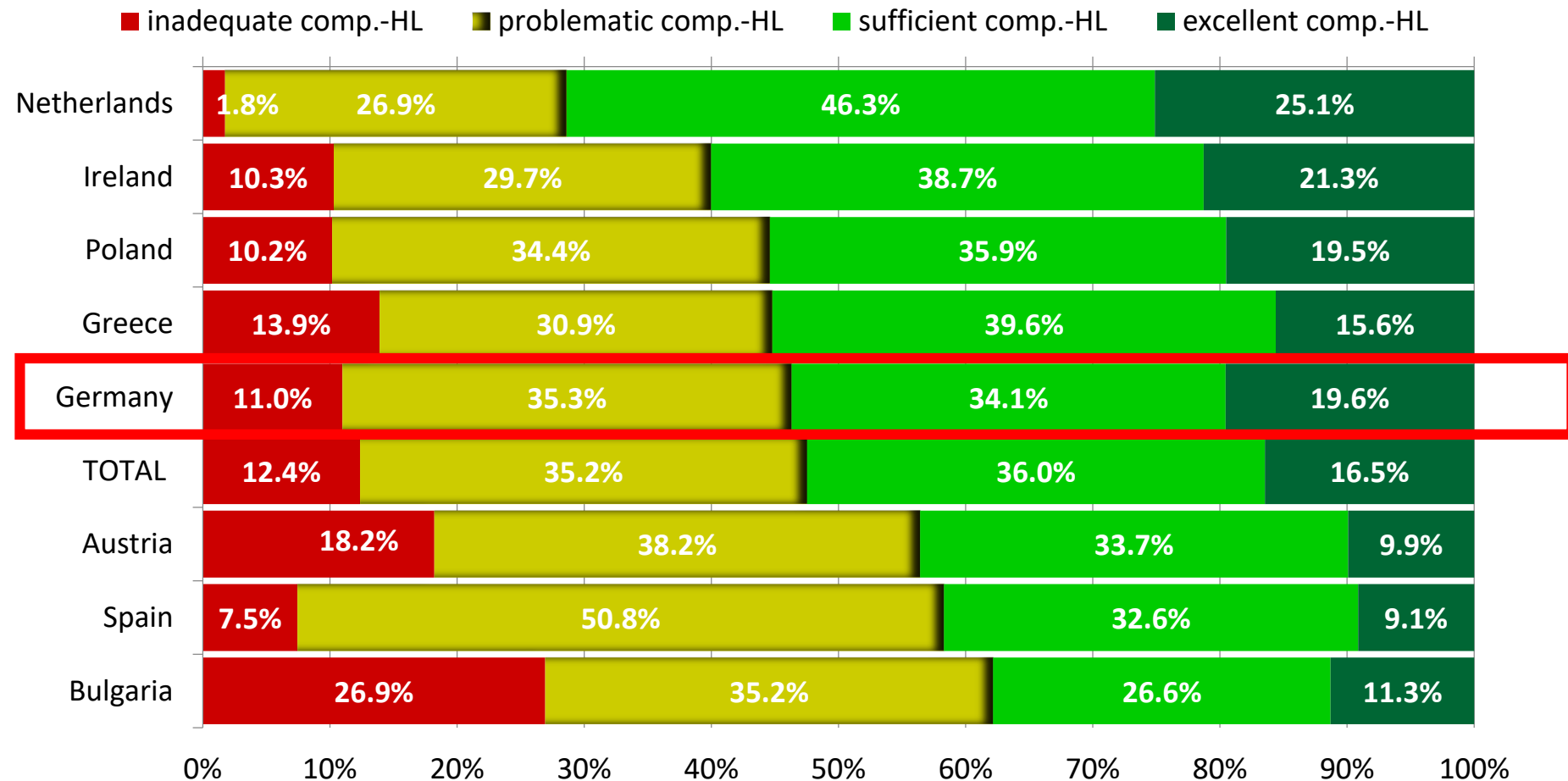
Prof. Doris Schaeffer, University of Bielefeld, Bielefeld



Health Literacy in Germany

- Late uptake of health literacy debates
- Public Health in Germany not very amenable to health literacy (e.g. due to education sciences not being seen as core aspect of public health)
- Then came the HLS-EU...

% of Comprehensive HL Levels for Countries and Total Sample



Sørensen K, Pelikan JM, Rothlin F, Ganahl K, Slonska Z, Doyle G, Fullam J, Kondilis B, Agrafiotis D, Uiters E, Falcon M, Mensing M, Tchamov K, van den Broucke S, Brand H. Health literacy in Europe: comparative results of the European health literacy survey (HLS-EU). *European journal of public health.* 2015;25(6):1053-8.

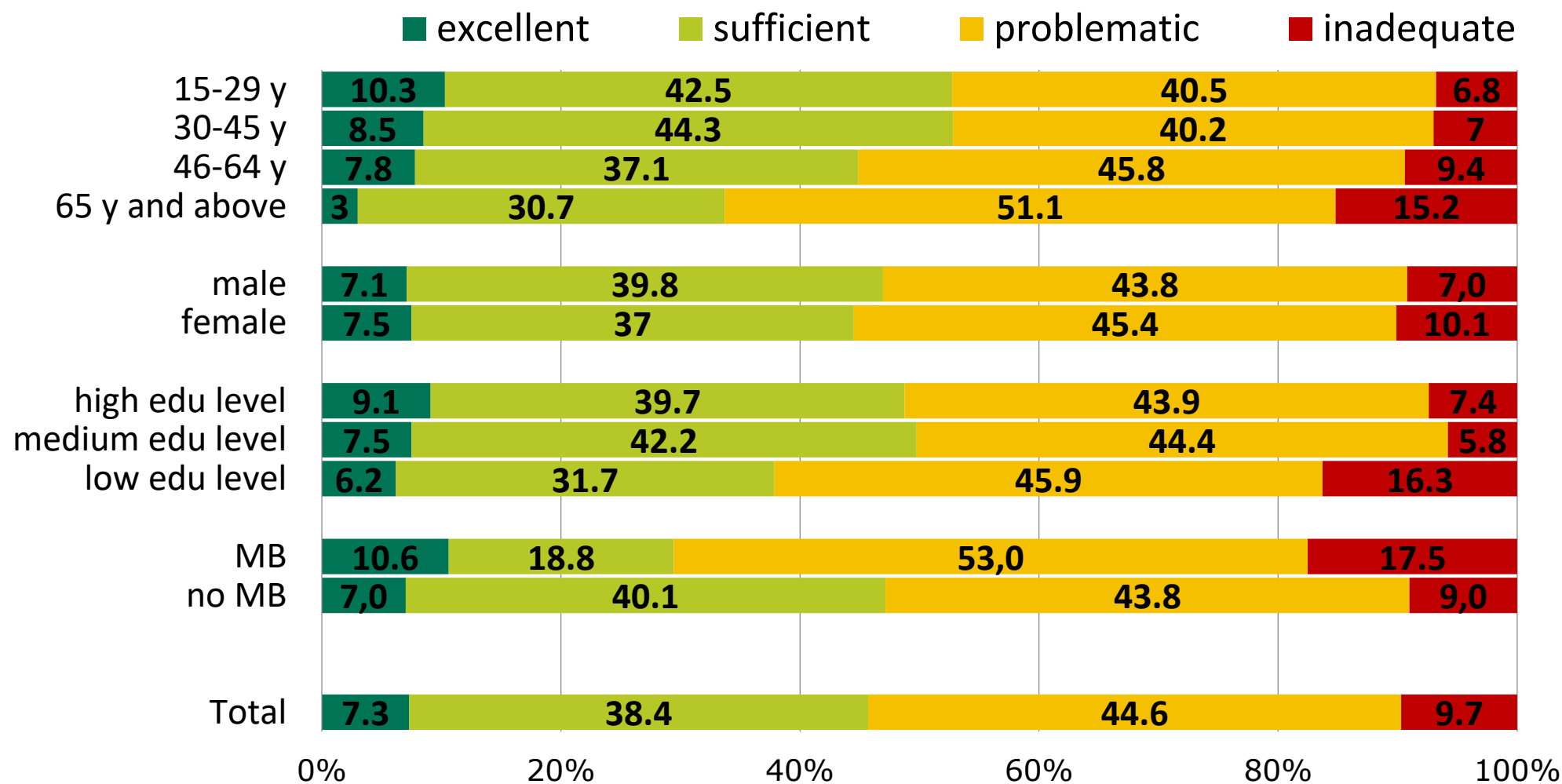
Health Literacy Survey Germany (HLS-GER)

- Project duration: 2013-2016
- Representative, cross-sectional survey among German population
- Data collection via computer-assisted personal interviews (2014)
- Representative probability sample of 2,000 respondents
- Respondents aged 15-years+
- Measures (self-assessed):
 - health service use*: doctor, hospital, and other health professionals (last 12 months), emergency service (last 24 months),
 - socio-demographic indicators*: gender, financial deprivation, education level, migrant background
 - health status indicators*: self-perceived health, chronic illness
 - health literacy*: HLS-EU-Q47

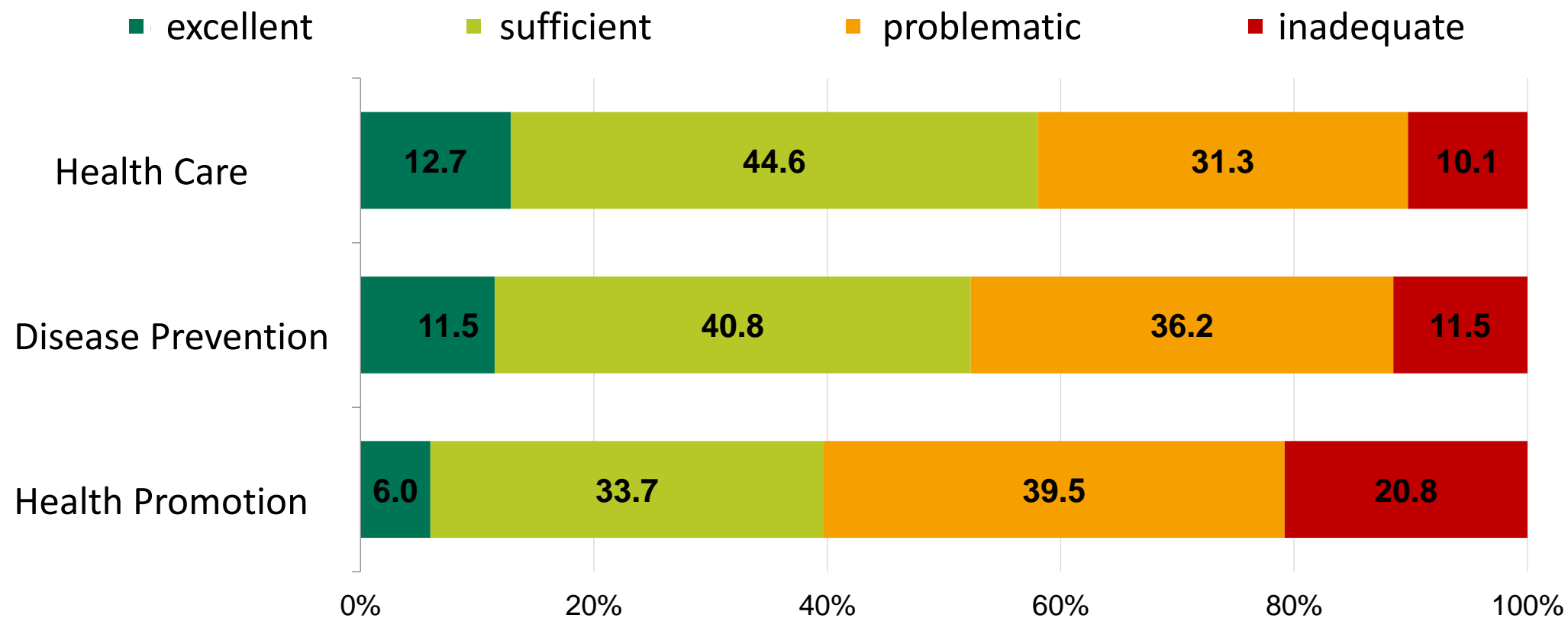
Measurement Instrument HLS-EU-Q-47

Health Literacy	Access/obtain information	Understand information	Process/appraise information	Apply/use information
Health care	Ability to access information on medical or clinical issues	Ability to understand medical information and derive meaning	Ability to interpret and evaluate medical information	Ability to make informed decisions on medical information
Disease prevention	Ability to access information on risk factors for health	Ability to understand information on risk factors and derive meaning	Ability to interpret and evaluate information on risk factors for health	Ability to make informed decisions on risk factors for health
Health promotion	Ability to update oneself on health-related issues	Ability to understand health-related information and derive meaning	Ability to interpret and evaluate health-related information	Ability to make informed decisions on health-related information

Prevalence of limited health literacy



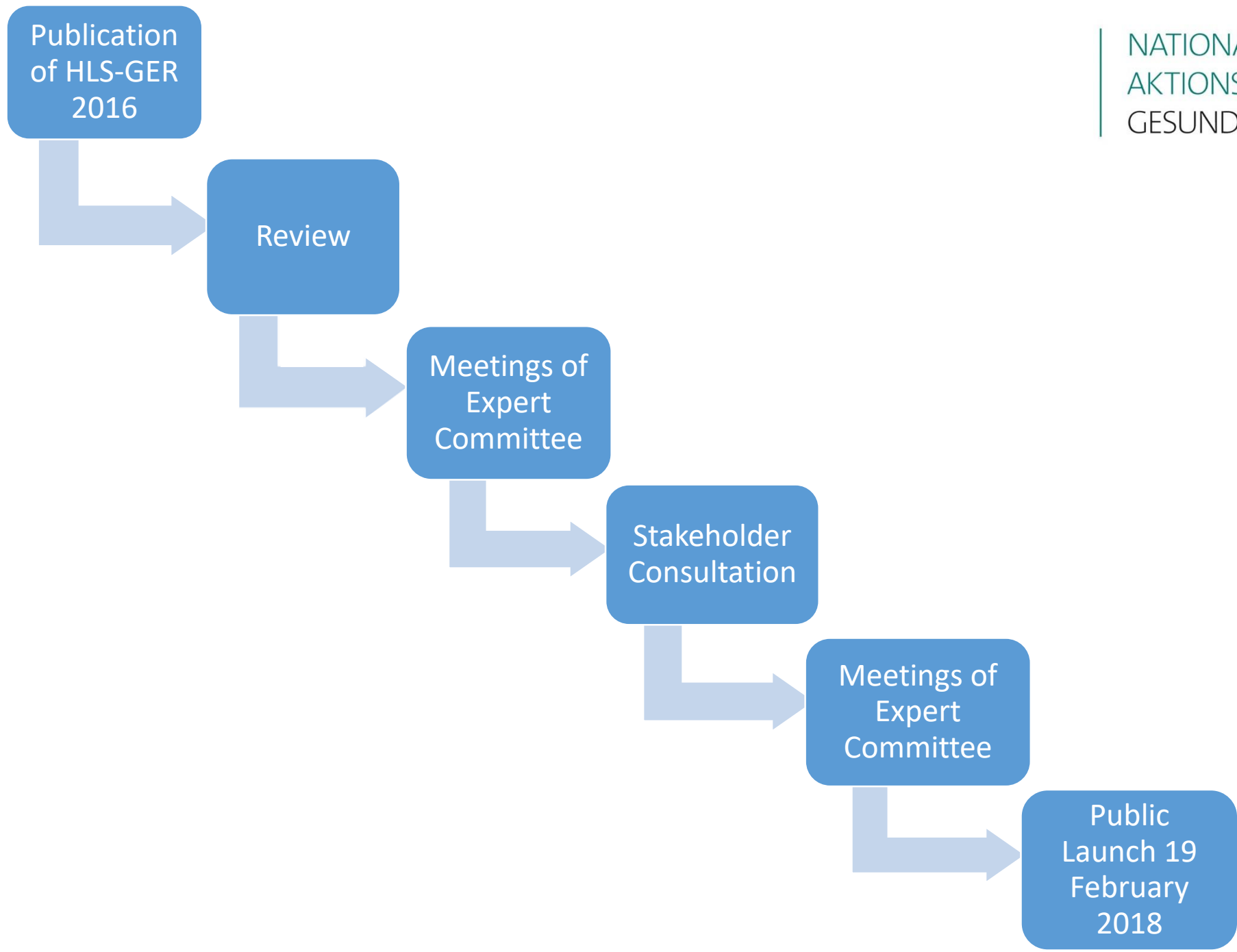
Three areas of health literacy: Health Care, Disease Prevention, Health Promotion



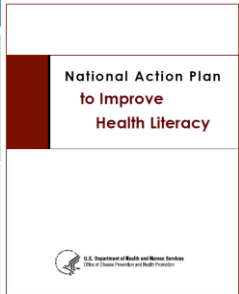
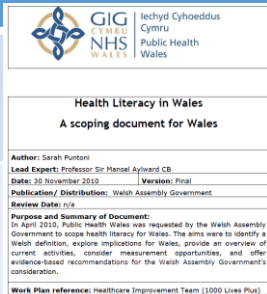
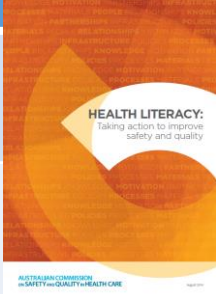

Project: National Action Plan Health Literacy

- Lead:** Prof. Dr. Doris Schaeffer, University of Bielefeld (Head)
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Dr. Annett Horn, University of Bielefeld
- Funders:** Robert Bosch Stiftung (Foundation)
AOK-Bundesverband (Statutory Health Insurance)
- Patron:** Minister of Health Hermann Gröhe





Review of national action plans

	American Plan	Welsh Plan	Australian Plan	Scottish Plan
Aim				
Process of development				
Definition of Health Literacy				
Framing of Health Literacy				
Actors				
Implementation				



Expert Committee

- Prof. Dr. med. Attila Altiner
Medical Faculty Rostock
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- Prof. Dr. Michael Ewers MPH
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Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband
– Gesamtverband e.V.
- Dr. Sebastian Schmidt-Kaehler
Patienten[projekte]
- Ministerialrat Dr. Alexander Schmidt-Gernig
Ministry of Health
- Prof. Dr. Christiane Woopen
University of Cologne



Terminology and definition of health literacy

Figure: Relationship between individual and organisational/systemic health literacy



Health literacy is linked to literacy and entails people's knowledge, motivation and competences to access, understand, appraise, and apply health information in order to make judgments and take decisions in everyday life concerning healthcare, disease prevention and health promotion to maintain or improve quality of life during the life course.

(Sorensen et al. 2012)

Stakeholder consultation

Aims

- First feedback on a summary of the draft plan
- Assess different stakeholders' understanding of health literacy
- Gather overview of existing activity in the field of health literacy
- Needs assessment
- Gather opinions of how the problem of limited health literacy can be tackled
- Garner support for the National Action Plan

Who

- Approximately 20 in-depth interviews with representatives of different sectors
- Stakeholder consultation event
- Consultation meeting with representatives of patients' organisations
- Focus groups with patients





Content of the National Action Plan to improve Health Literacy in Germany

- Why do we need a National Action Plan on Health Literacy?
- What is Health Literacy?
- Why does Health Literacy gain in importance?
- How good is Health Literacy in Germany?
- How can Health Literacy be improved?
- What are the underlying principles when improving Health Literacy?

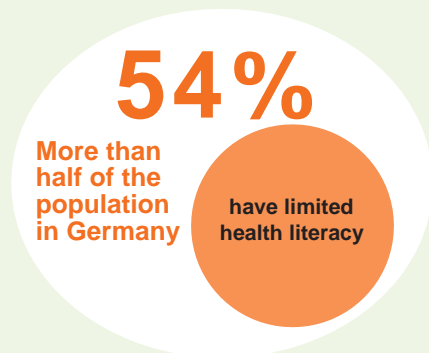
In Brief

National Action Plan – Strengthening Health Literacy in Germany

In Germany, approximately every second individual has limited health literacy. People with limited health literacy find it difficult to find, understand, appraise and apply health-related information. Therefore, an expert committee has developed this national action plan to strengthen health literacy. The plan focuses on four areas of action and presents 15 specific recommendations to improve and strengthen health literacy in Germany.

PROBLEM

What is the problem?



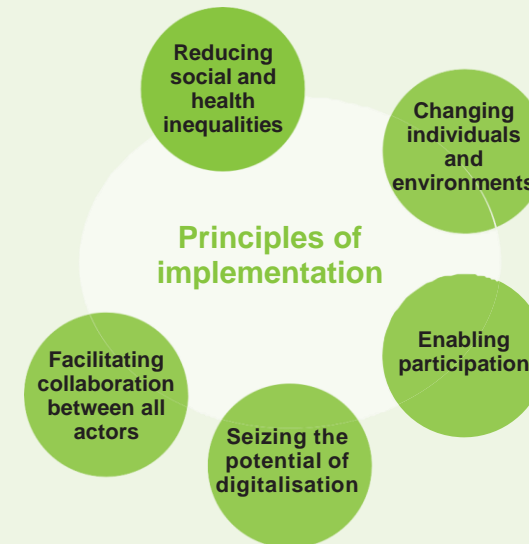
RECOMMENDATIONS

What has to be done?

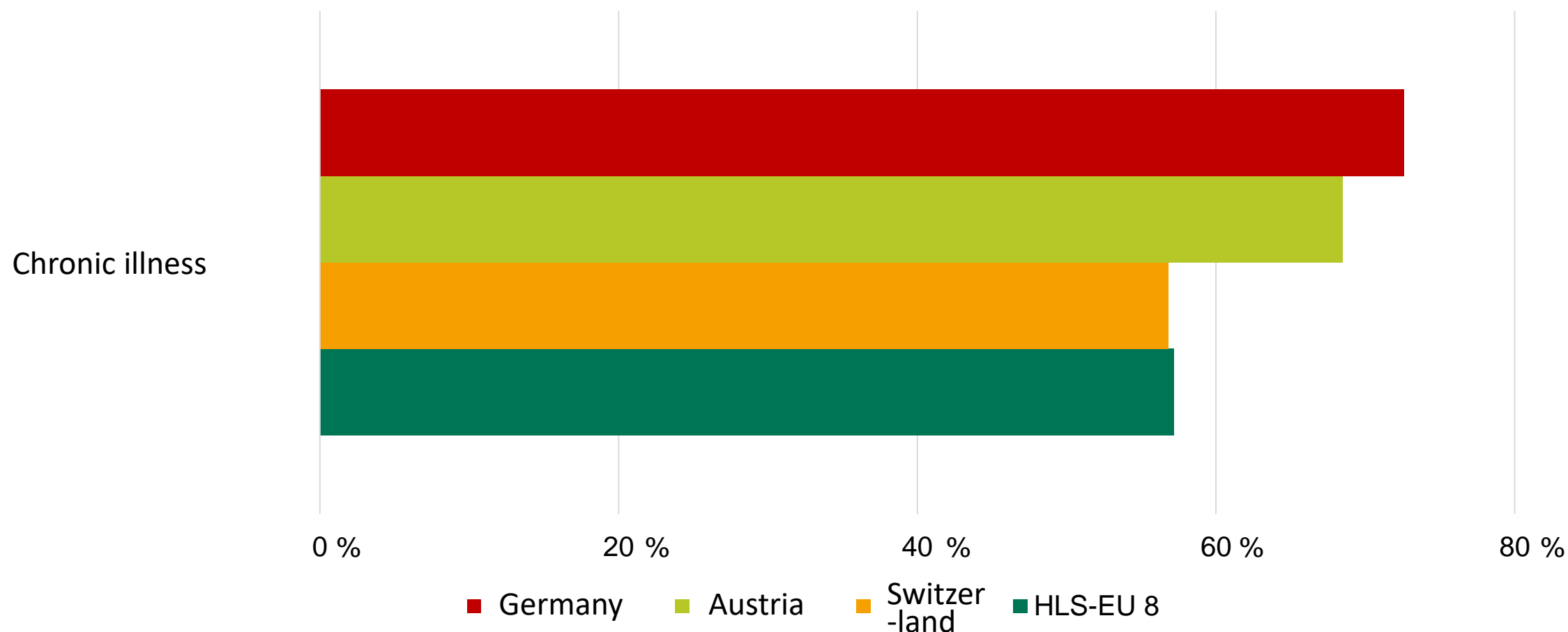


PRINCIPLES

What is important?



Health literacy of people with chronic illness: Germany, Austria, Switzerland and HLS-EU 8



National Action Plan

Strengthening Health Literacy in Germany

An overview of the recommendations

Recommendations 1–5

Fostering health literacy in daily life

1. Enabling the education system to strengthen health literacy early in life
2. Promoting health literacy in the workplace
3. Strengthening health literacy in relation to consumption- and nutrition-related decisions
4. Facilitating dealing with health information in the media
5. Empowering communities to strengthen health literacy locally

Recommendations 6–10

Making the health system more user-friendly

6. Establishing health literacy as a standard on all levels of the health system
7. Facilitating navigation of the health system, increasing transparency, reducing administrative hurdles
8. Improving communication between health professionals and the health system users
9. Making health information more user-friendly
10. Facilitating and strengthening patient participation

Recommendations 11–14

Health literacy and chronic illness

11. Integrating health literacy into the care of the chronically ill
12. Facilitating and supporting adequate coping with chronic illness and their implications
13. Strengthening self-management
14. Fostering health literacy in coping with activities of daily life

Recommendation 15

Expanding health literacy research

15. Expanding research into health literacy

Principles

Principles for implementing the recommendations into good practice

1. Reducing social and health inequalities
2. Changing both individual and structural conditions
3. Enabling participation
4. Seizing the potential of digitalisation
5. Facilitating collaboration between actors from all sectors of society

Media work and plans for implementation

Media work

- Website: www.nap-gesundheitskompetenz.de (currently German only)
- Short summary of the National Action Plan (flyer-format)
Will be communicated via newsletters, journals, etc. (e.g. journal of a statutory health insurance)
- Articles in practitioners journals

Implementation

- Contact point for health literacy
- Three workshops to discuss the national action plan



A „bottom up“/expert initiative: Reflection on challenges and opportunities

- Parallel developments HLS-GER, the National Action Plan and the Alliance on Health Literacy > evidence-based policymaking
- Independence, expert opinion and neutrality vs. Political strategy
- „Bottom up“: Lack of power / being detached from political decision making
But: Minister of Health Hermann Gröhe as patron
- Political situation with difficulties in formation of the German government

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Thank you for your attention

