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

Dominique Vogt, Doris Schaeffer, Ullrich Bauer, Kai Kolpatzik, Klaus Hurrelmann
Health Literacy in Germany

• Late uptake of health literacy debates

• This changed with the HLS-EU...
  
  ... benchmarking generates political interest
  ... poor results sparked academic attention
Health literacy Levels for Countries

Netherlands: 25.1% excellent, 46.3% sufficient, 26.9% problematic, 1.8% inadequate

Ireland: 21.3% excellent, 38.7% sufficient, 29.7% problematic, 10.3% inadequate

Poland: 19.5% excellent, 35.9% sufficient, 34.4% problematic, 10.2% inadequate

Greece: 15.6% excellent, 39.6% sufficient, 30.9% problematic, 13.9% inadequate

Germany (NRW): 19.6% excellent, 34.1% sufficient, 35.3% problematic, 11.0% inadequate

Austria: 9.9% excellent, 33.7% sufficient, 38.2% problematic, 18.2% inadequate

Spain: 9.1% excellent, 32.6% sufficient, 50.8% problematic, 7.5% inadequate

Health Literacy Survey Germany (HLS-GER)

Project duration: 2013-2016

Study design: Representative, cross-sectional survey among German population (n=2,000), Respondents aged 15-years+

Data collection: computer-assisted personal interviews (2014)

Health literacy: HLS-EU-Q47
Health literacy in the German population

- **15-29 y**: 10.3% excellent, 42.5% sufficient, 40.5% problematic, 6.8% inadequate
- **30-45 y**: 8.5% excellent, 44.3% sufficient, 40.2% problematic, 9.7% inadequate
- **46-64 y**: 7.8% excellent, 37.1% sufficient, 45.8% problematic, 9.4% inadequate
- **65 y and above**: 3% excellent, 30.7% sufficient, 51.1% problematic, 15.2% inadequate

- **Male**: 7.1% excellent, 39.8% sufficient, 43.8% problematic, 7% inadequate
- **Female**: 7.5% excellent, 37% sufficient, 45.4% problematic, 10.1% inadequate

- **High edu level**: 9.1% excellent, 39.7% sufficient, 43.9% problematic, 7.4% inadequate
- **Medium edu level**: 7.5% excellent, 42.2% sufficient, 44.4% problematic, 5.8% inadequate
- **Low edu level**: 6.2% excellent, 31.7% sufficient, 45.9% problematic, 16.3% inadequate

- **MB**: 10.6% excellent, 53.0% sufficient, 17.5% problematic, 9% inadequate
- **No MB**: 7% excellent, 40.1% sufficient, 43.8% problematic, 9% inadequate

- **Chronic cond.**: 2.1% excellent, 55.9% sufficient, 16.8% problematic, 7.2% inadequate
- **No chronic cond.**: 9.1% excellent, 42.8% sufficient, 41% problematic, 7% inadequate

- **Total**: 7.3% excellent, 38.4% sufficient, 44.6% problematic, 9.7% inadequate
Project: National Action Plan Health Literacy

Lead: Prof. Dr. Doris Schaeffer, University of Bielefeld (Head)
     Prof. Dr. Klaus Hurrelmann, Hertie School of Governance (Deputy)
     Prof. Dr. Ullrich Bauer, University of Bielefeld
     Dr. med. Kai Kolpatzik, AOK-Bundesverband

Project office: Dr. Dominique Vogt, Hertie School of Governance (from 2017)
                Dr. Annett Horn, University of Bielefeld

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English version available:
www.nap-gesundheitskompetenz.de

Content of the National Action Plan 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.

**What is the problem?**

More than half of the population in Germany have limited health literacy.

**What has to be done?**

Fostering health literacy in daily life

Expanding health literacy research

Health literacy and chronic illness

Making the health system more user-friendly

**What is important?**

Reducing social and health inequalities

Changing individuals and environments

Facilitating collaboration between all actors

Seizing the potential of digitalisation

Enabling participation
National Action Plan
Strengthening Health Literacy in Germany
An overview of the recommendations

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

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 1–5

Recommendations 6–10

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

Expanding health literacy research
15. Expanding research into health literacy

Recommendation 15

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

Principles

Recommendations 11–14
Plans for implementation (1)

Four expert workshops to discuss the national action plan

**Workshop 1**
Enabling the education system to strengthen health literacy early in life

**Workshop 2**
Integrating health literacy into the care of the chronically ill

**Workshop 3**
Facilitating dealing with health information in the media

**Workshop 4**
Making the health system more user-friendly

Policy Paper
Plans for implementation (2)

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Research – Practice – Policy
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Key Note Speaker:
Stephan van den Broucke, Ilona Kickbusch, Diane, Levin-Zamir, Don Nutbeam, Jürgen Pelikan, Kristine Sørensen
Thank you for your attention!

Dr. Dominique Vogt
Hertie School of Governance
Berlin
vogt@hertie-school.org