

THE ECONOMIC DISASTER IN EUROPE: PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOPATHOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

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Although population-level research between economic crises and specific mental disorders is considered scarce, yet there is some evidence arising from previous economic crises in the USA, Asia and the former Soviet Union as well as some evidence arising from the present economic crisis associating such crises with psychopathology and especially depression and suicide. A review of the existing evidence will be carried out in this presentation. The importance of poverty, unemployment and debt will be underlined and the trans-generational effect of economic crises on children will be stressed.

The conclusions are the following:

Depression, especially in its self-destructive clinical expression is one of the major psychopathological conditions that are linked with economic crises. However, it is important to differentiate between understandable sadness, a potentially productive response to economic crises and the dysfunctional response represented by depression.

Screening for depression and suicidal tendencies during periods of economic crises as a routine psychiatric prevention strategy is recommended.

In view of the association of suicidal potential with unemployment, active labor market and family support programs are necessary.

The cost/effectiveness of mental health provision programs (investing in mental health) especially during periods of economic crises should be demonstrated and highlighted.

Highlighting the above and advocating for the establishment of cost-effective active labor market programs, rehabilitation and family support programs are recommended.

References:

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