

Economic burden of CVD across the European Union: trends over the last decade

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Aims: In 2003 we estimated the costs of cardiovascular disease (CVD) to the European Union to be €169 billion annually. Improving our understanding of the economic burden of disease and its trends over time is essential to help evaluate the impact of public health policies and prioritise the allocation of future research funds.

Methods and results: We estimated CVD-related expenditure for the 28 countries in the EU, using aggregate data on morbidity, mortality, and healthcare resource use. Healthcare costs were estimated from expenditure on primary, outpatient, emergency, and inpatient care, as well as medications. Costs of unpaid care and lost earnings due to morbidity and premature death were included in the study. CVD was estimated to cost the EU €210 billion in 2015, with healthcare accounting for 53% of costs. Productivity losses and informal care represented 26% and 21% of costs, respectively. CHD represented 28% and cerebrovascular diseases 22% of overall CVD costs.

Conclusion: CVD is a leading public health problem. Our study is the first to assess the economic burden of CVD across the EU over time, and our results should help policy makers evaluate policy impact and prioritize research expenditures.

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