

Summary of methods (published as supplied by the authors)

The starting point was the material published by the World Health Organization and its Commission on Macroeconomics and Health as well as several earlier literature reviews on the relationship between health and the economy in poor countries.

The search engine Google and the following databases have been checked for articles and working documents:

- social science research network (www.ssrn.com);
- RePEc: research papers in economics (<http://econpapers.repec.org/>);
- National Bureau of Economic Research (www.nber.org) and its subsections health, labour, economic growth;
- sources listed in the health economics core library project (2003) (www.academyhealth.org).

The key terms used were: ‘health and economy’; ‘health & economic growth’; ‘health & labor productivity’; ‘health & labor supply’; ‘health & retirement’; ‘health & employment’; ‘health & education’; ‘health & earnings’; ‘health & wages’; ‘health & human capital’; ‘health & sustainability’; ‘health status in Europe’; ‘health & developed countries’; ‘investing in health’; ‘investment in health & economic growth’.

We have also hand searched publications of major international organisations: European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, World Bank, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, European Commission, and the International Monetary Fund. The websites of several universities have been checked for appropriate references, including the London School of Economics, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, University of York, and Harvard University.