

Symposium OSPI-Europe

Public attitudes toward depression & seeking professional help:

Baseline survey prior to OSPI intervention

Ella Arensman¹, Gert Scheerder², Chantal Van Audenhove² & the OSPI Consortium

¹ National Suicide Research Foundation (NSRF), Cork (Ireland)

² LUCAS, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Belgium)

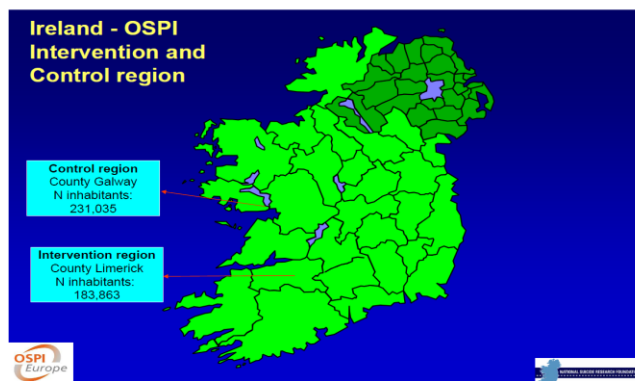
Safety 2010 Conference, London, 22th September 2010

Method

- **Survey method**
 - representative general population survey
 - by means of phone interviews
 - stratified sample: gender & quota ~ population distribution
 - adult population (18+)
 - in 4 OSPI intervention countries
 - Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Portugal
 - intervention and control regions (n=500 each)
 - Total sample: N=4011
 - baseline assessment before intervention period
 - same survey repeated after intervention
- => assess effects of intervention in controlled design

OSPI intervention regions

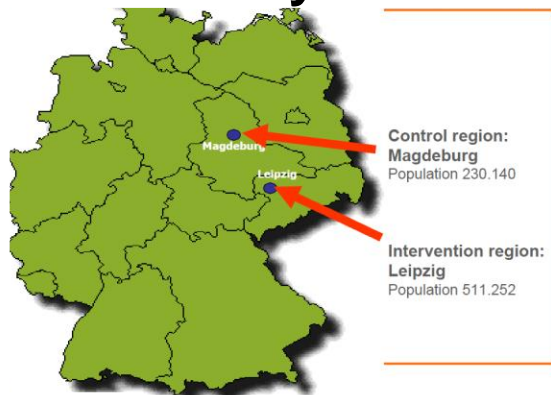
Ireland



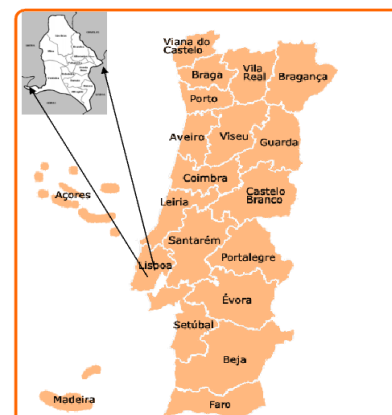
Hungary



Germany



Portugal



Method

- **Survey instrument**
 - Sociodemographics
 - gender, age, education, marital status, occupational status
 - Mental health
 - self-reported depression, core symptoms, MHI-5, DSH
 - experience mental ill-health relatives, alcohol abuse, social support
 - Mental health care use
 - ever discussed psychological problems (GP or MH professional)
 - ever received treatment (in case of depression / DSH)
 - intention to seek professional help (in case of)
 - Attitudes toward mental health
 - Depression Stigma Scale (DSS)
 - 2 scales: personal stigma < > perceived stigma (social norm)
 - Attitude toward seeking profess. psychological help (ATSPPH-SF)
 - 2 scales: openness to help < > value of help

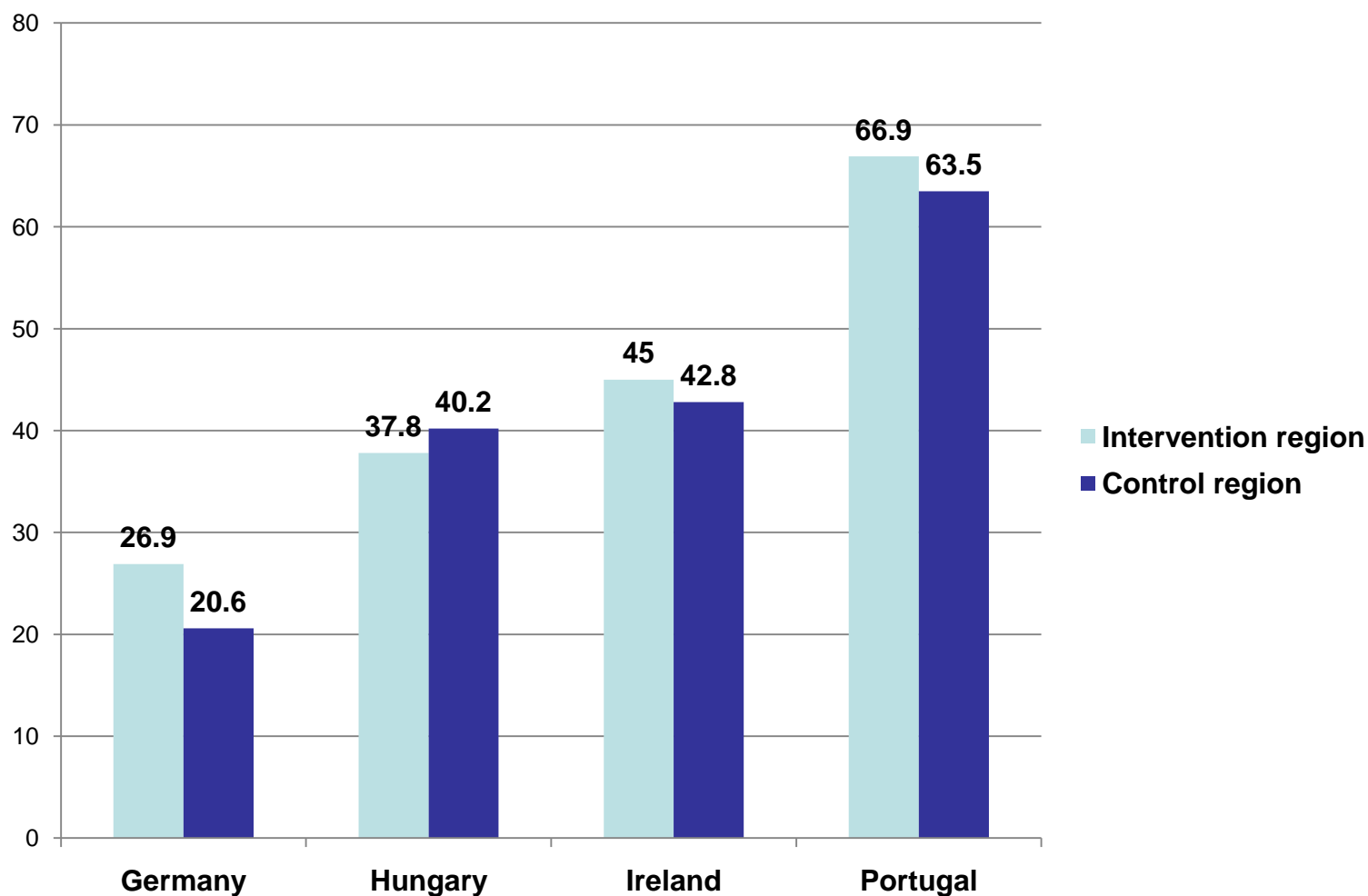
Results

- **Sociodemographics**
 - gender and age quota fairly achieved
 - 52% females - 48% males
 - mean age: 47.8 years old
 - education
 - 13,0 years of schooling (mean)
 - country differences (Hungary 14,9 – Portugal 11,7)
 - marital status
 - **41%** living alone (mean)
 - slightly elevated in intervention regions
 - occupational status
 - **8,1%** unemployment (mean)
 - country differences (Ireland 12.0% - Hungary 5.6%)

Results

- **Experienced mental ill-health in relatives** (ever)
 - depression: **43%**
 - deliberate self-harm: **17%**
 - suicide: **13%**
 - large country differences (Germany 24% < > Portugal 65%)
- **Alcohol abuse** (last year)
 - **7%** „yes“ *any* alcohol abuse item
 - higher rate (10%) in Germany
- **Social support** (currently)
 - **85%** reports „great deal“ of social support from *any* source

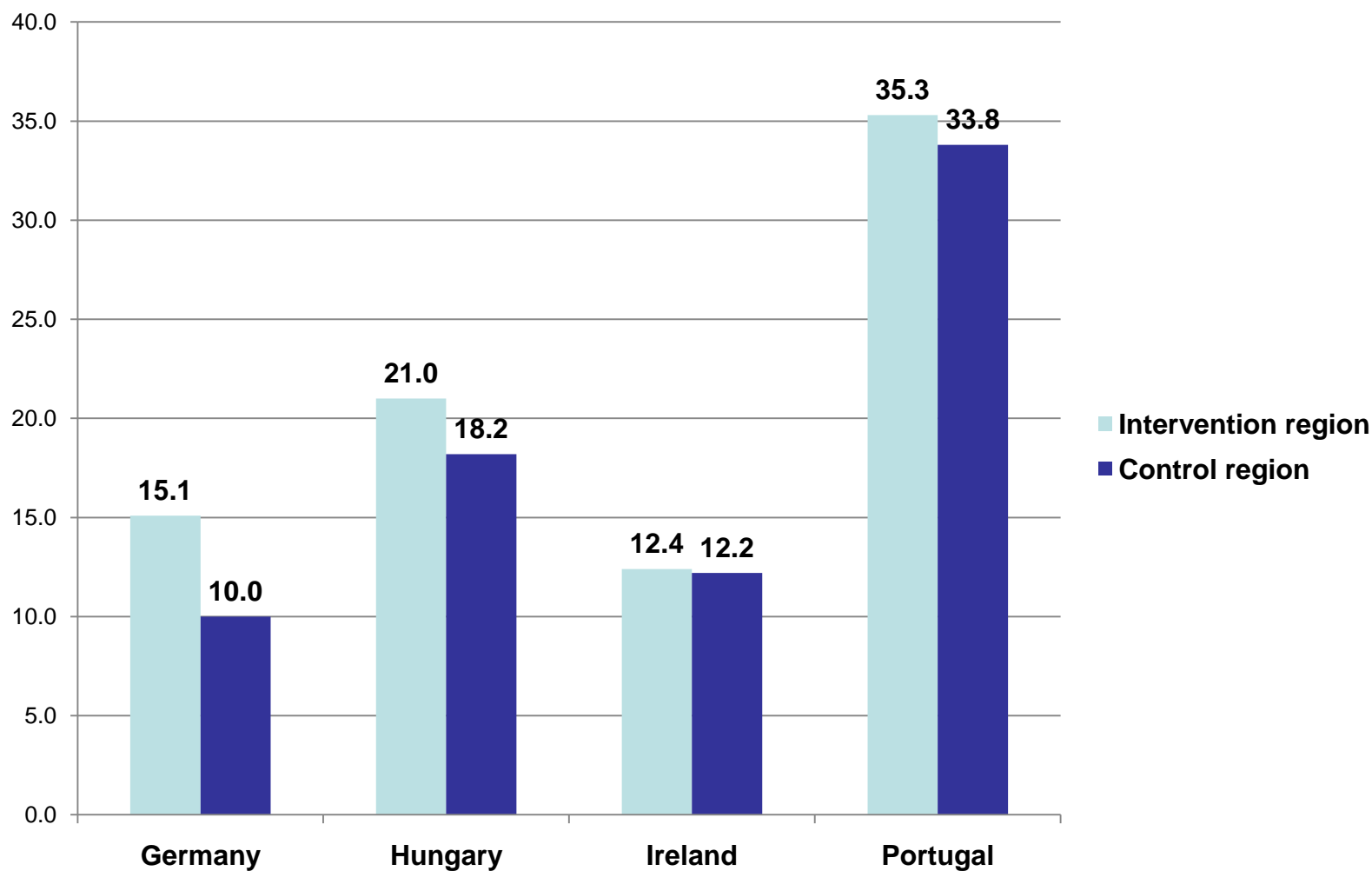
% depression in close family or friends



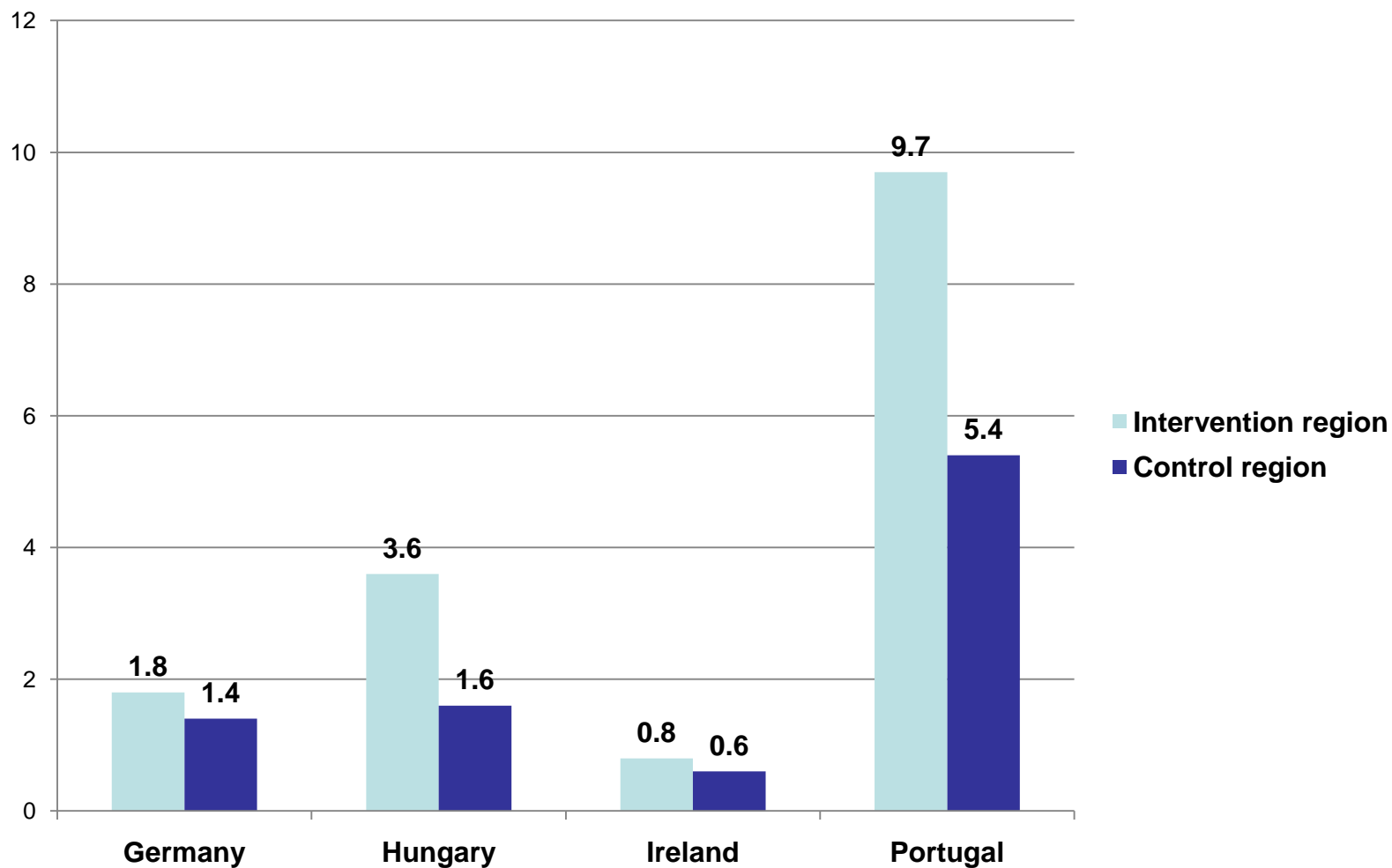
Mental health

- **Self-reported depression: 19,8%**
- **Symptoms of depression** („sad“ „lost interest“)
 - **35%** *any* symptom
 - **20%** *both* symptoms
- **Deliberate self-harm: 3,1%**
- **For all measures:**
 - high rates in Portugal
 - elevated rates in intervention regions (esp. Germany)

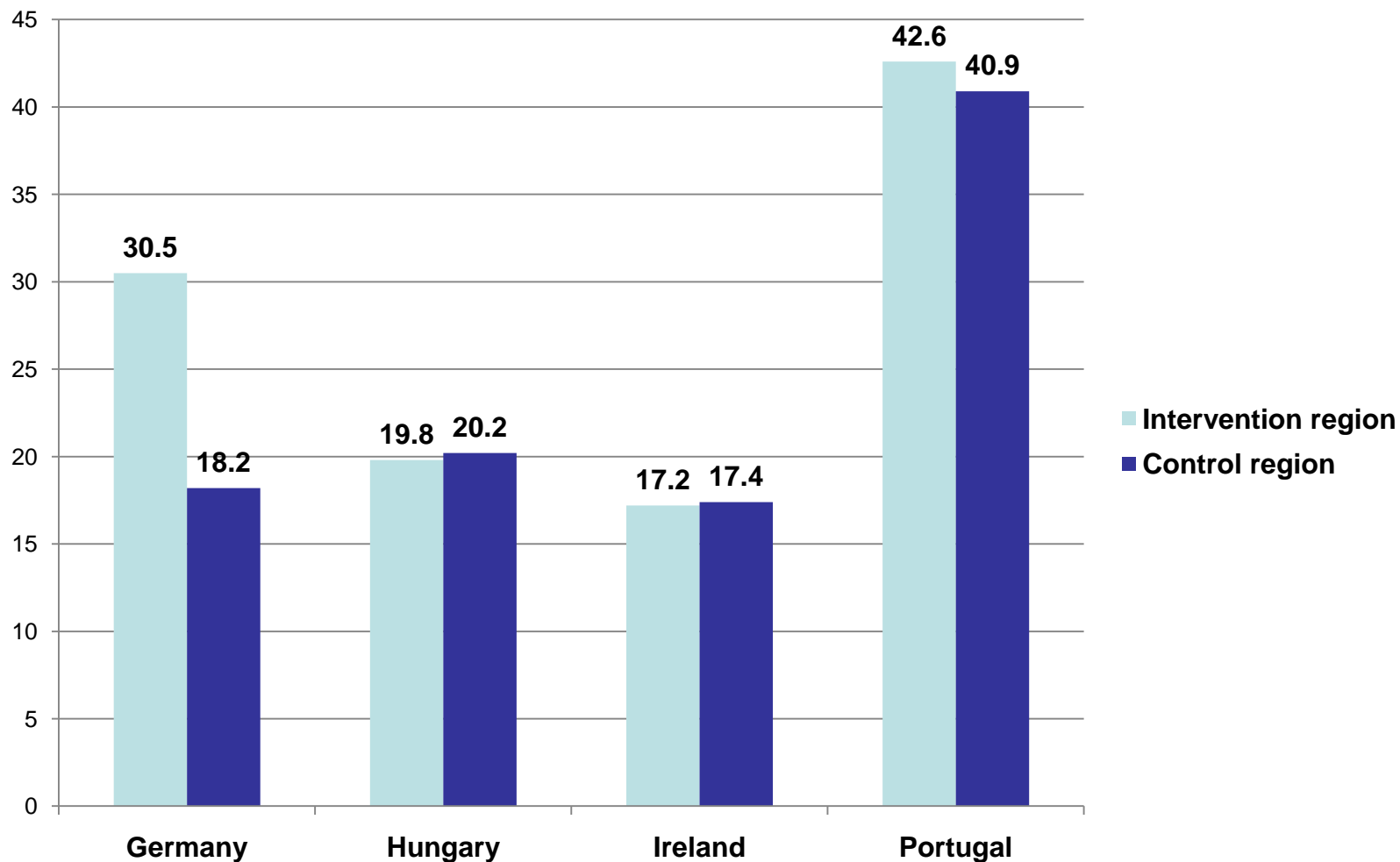
% Self-reported depression (ever)



% Deliberate self-harm (ever)



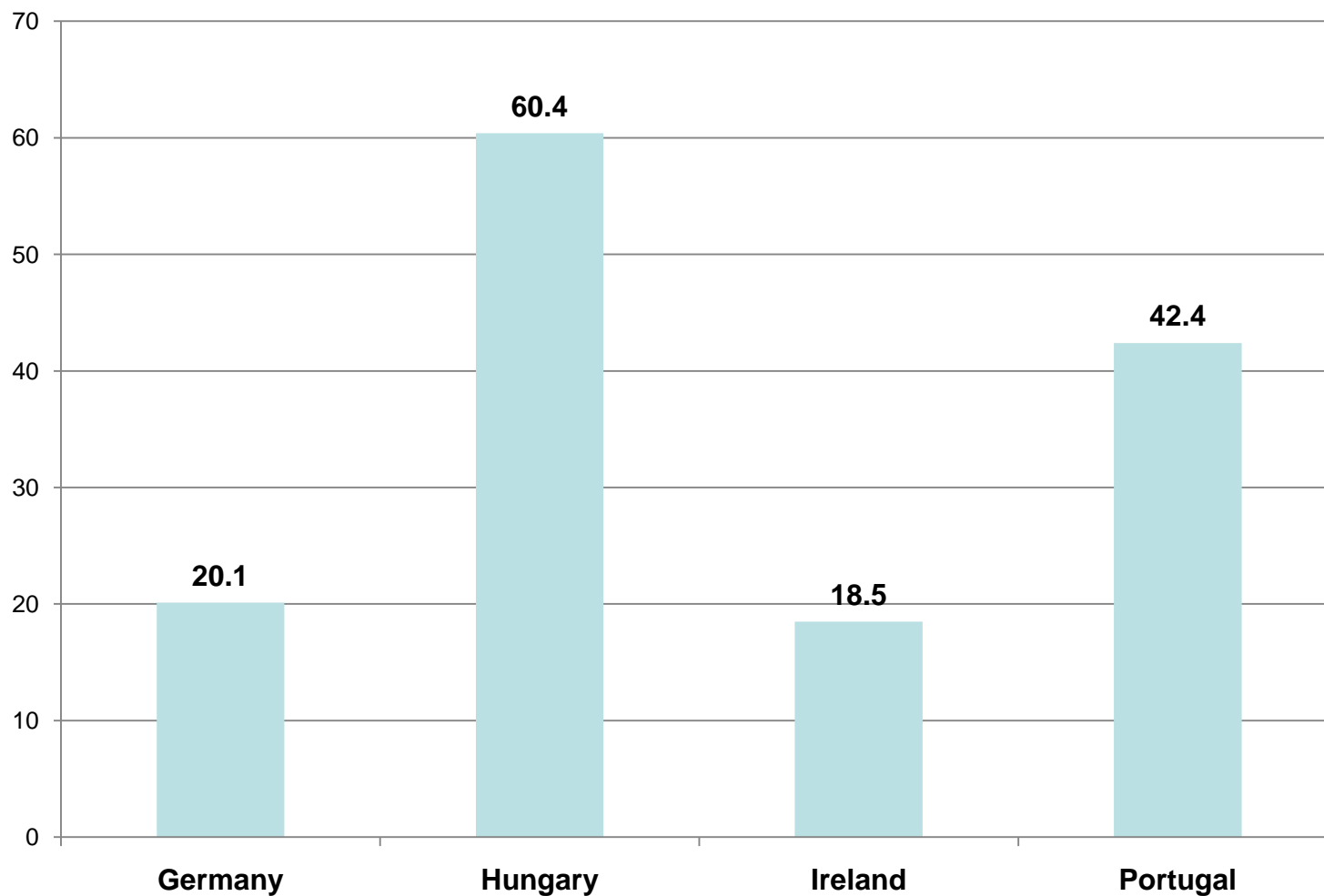
% ever discussed psychological problems



Attitudes toward mental health

- **Attitude toward depression (DSS)**
 - Personal stigma scale
 - about **30%** agrees with stigmatising items
 - personal weakness, not real illness, better avoid, better not tell, ...
 - higher personal stigma in Hungary
 - 60% “snap out”
 - 46% “personal weakness”
 - some signs of lower personal stigma in Ireland
 - strange pattern in Portugal
 - higher score (42%) for “snap out” (although higher care use)

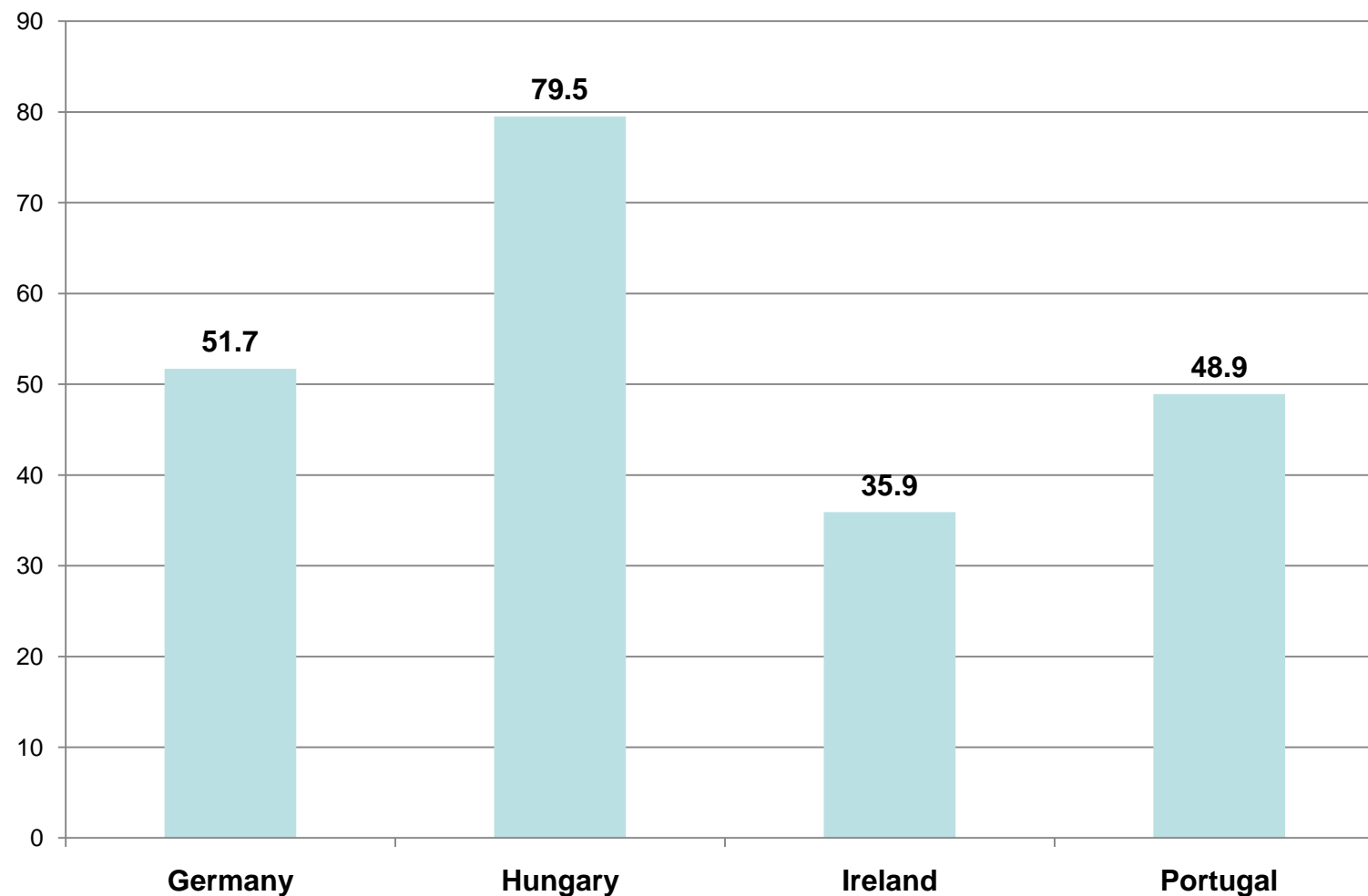
“People with depression could snap out if they wanted” (% agree)



Attitudes toward mental health

- **Attitude toward seeking professional help** (ATSPPH-SF)
 - Openness to professional help scale
 - about **70%** agrees with openness items
 - e.g. “I would want ... if upset for long time”
 - large country differences
 - less openness in Hungary
 - more openness in Portugal
 - Value of professional help scale
 - about **45%** agrees with (low) value items
 - e.g. “doubtful value”, “poor way”, “last resort”, ...
 - large country differences
 - lower perceived value in Hungary
 - more favourable attitudes in Ireland

“People should work out themselves; counselling is last resort” (% agree)



Conclusions

- **Clear baseline results**
 - Mental health & care use
 - relatively high rates of mental ill-health, esp. in Portugal
 - low degree of past care use in cases of depression / DSH
 - important country differences
 - differences intervention - control region
 - Attitudes toward mental health
 - moderate degree of personal stigma, but high social stigma
 - moderate degree of care use intention
 - relatively open to treatment, but lower perceived value
 - important country differences
 - strong relation between mental health - care use - attitudes
- **Scope for improvement by campaign**
- **Interesting results for further in-depth investigation**