



European Academy of  
Childhood Disability

# Impact of austerity on families with disabled children in Europe

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## Background

- Political response across Europe to 2008 financial crisis:
  - Austerity measures
  - Cuts to welfare benefits and public services

## Aim

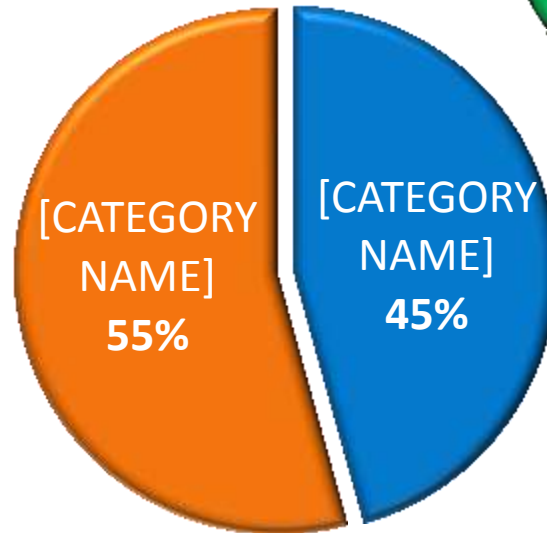
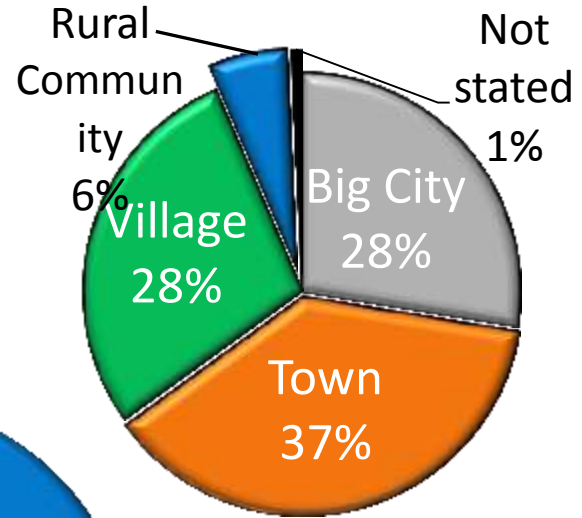
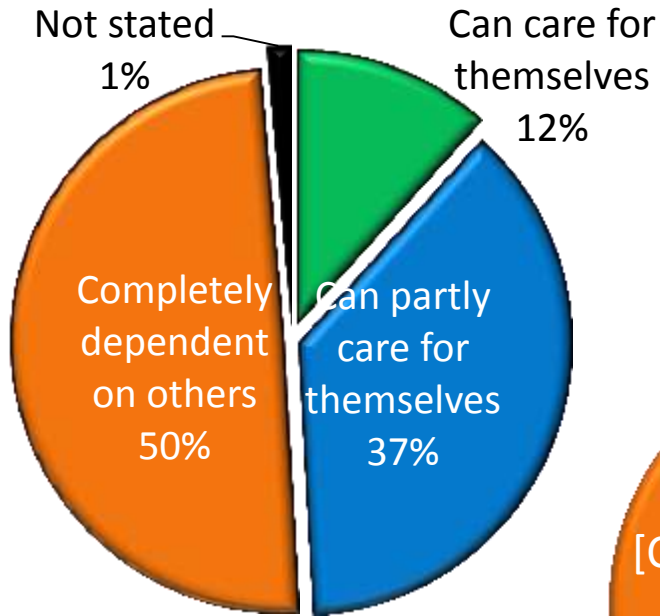
- To determine the impact of austerity on families with disabled children across Europe:
  - **Direct experience** of families
  - **Indirect impact** on families of cuts in services for disabled children

# Methods and Responses

- Survey of EACD national coordinators Oct 2016
  - 28 responses
- E-surveys open December 2016
  - 25 languages
  - For three months
- 958 professionals from 32 countries
- 731 families from 23 countries

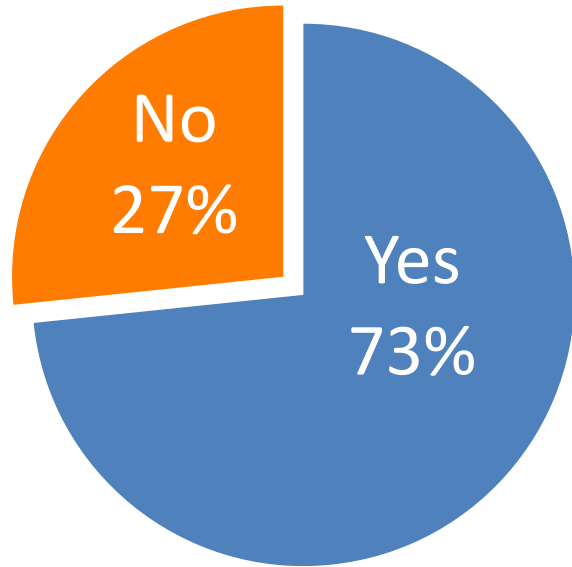


# Families demographics (n=728 from 23 countries)

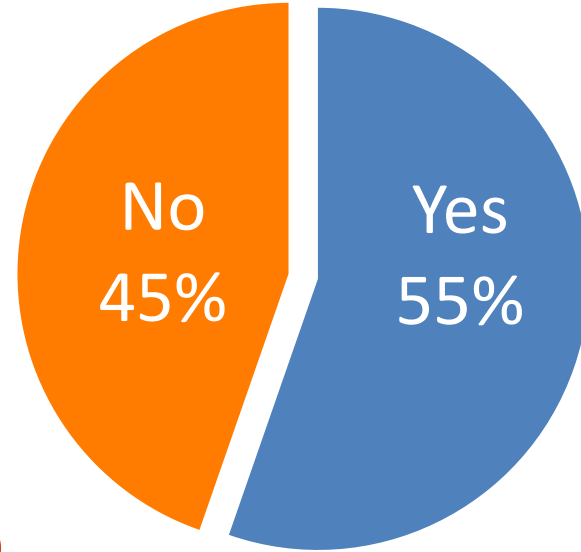


# Direct impact on families of cuts in services and/or welfare support (Professionals n=959 from 32 countries)

Austerity (n=424)



No austerity (n=535)

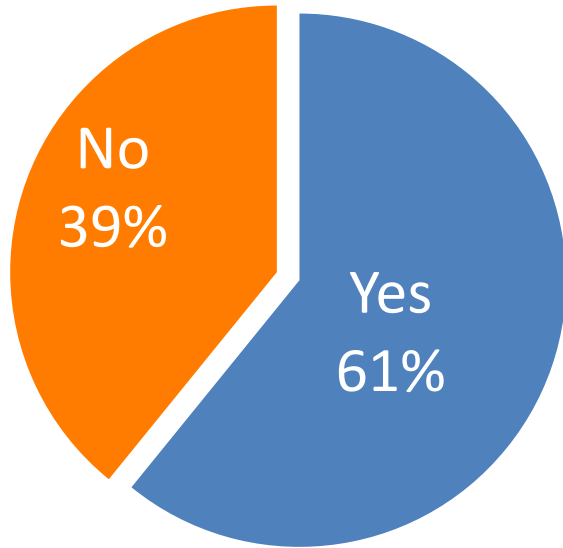


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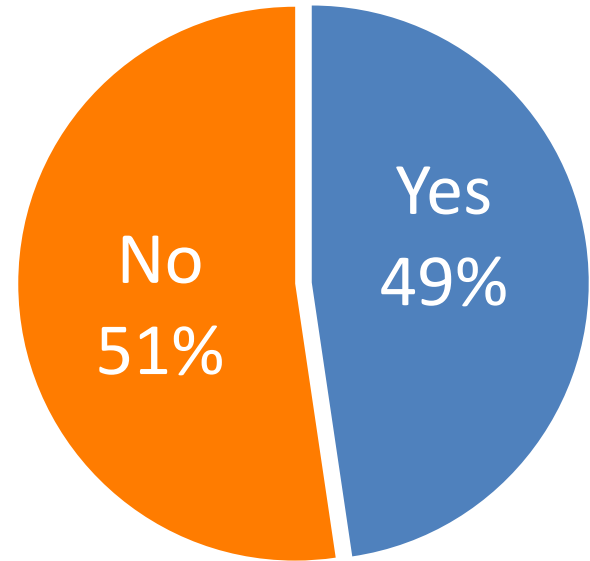
# Worse working conditions in last year

(Professionals: n=959 from 32 countries)

Austerity (n=424)



No austerity (n=535)



$p < 0.001$

In the last three years families report..

Increased waiting times

39% (288/731)

Access to therapists more difficult

52% (379/731)

Access to welfare support and benefits more difficult

57% (415/731)

Worse quality of services

91% (667/731)

ALL family groups reported health, education and social care needs less well met now vs ten years ago

Professionals from countries with no austerity cuts reported improvement in how well health, education and social care needs met vs to ten years ago

Professionals from countries with austerity cuts reported DECLINE in how well health, education and social care needs met vs ten years ago



## Conclusions

Professionals and families across Europe report decline in service access and quality regardless of austerity



Austerity cuts have impacted negatively on families with disabled children across Europe