

Advancing public health

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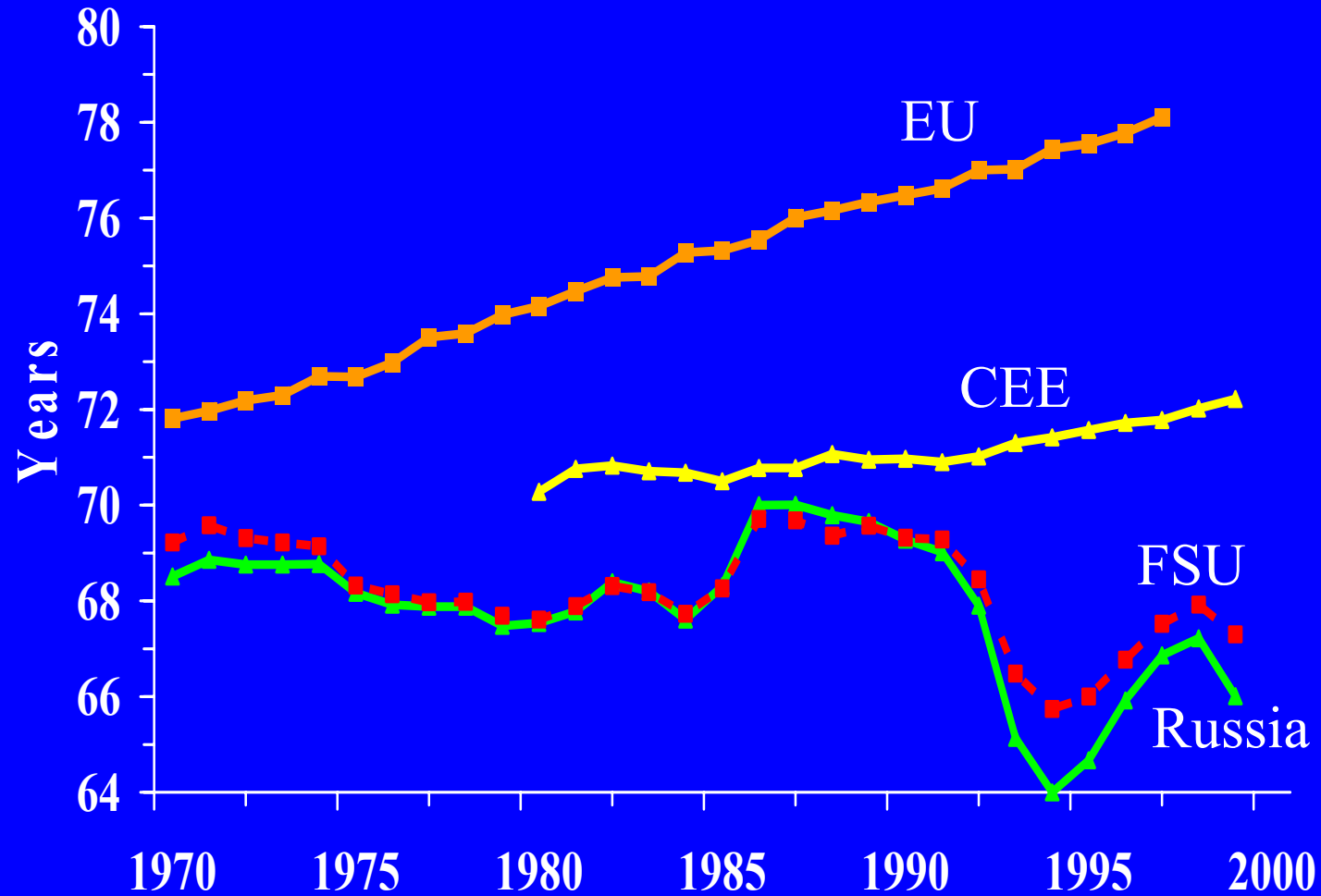
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*10 years of transition in Central and Eastern Europe
and the former Soviet Union*

Life expectancy at birth in Europe



Main causes of poor health in EE

Diseases

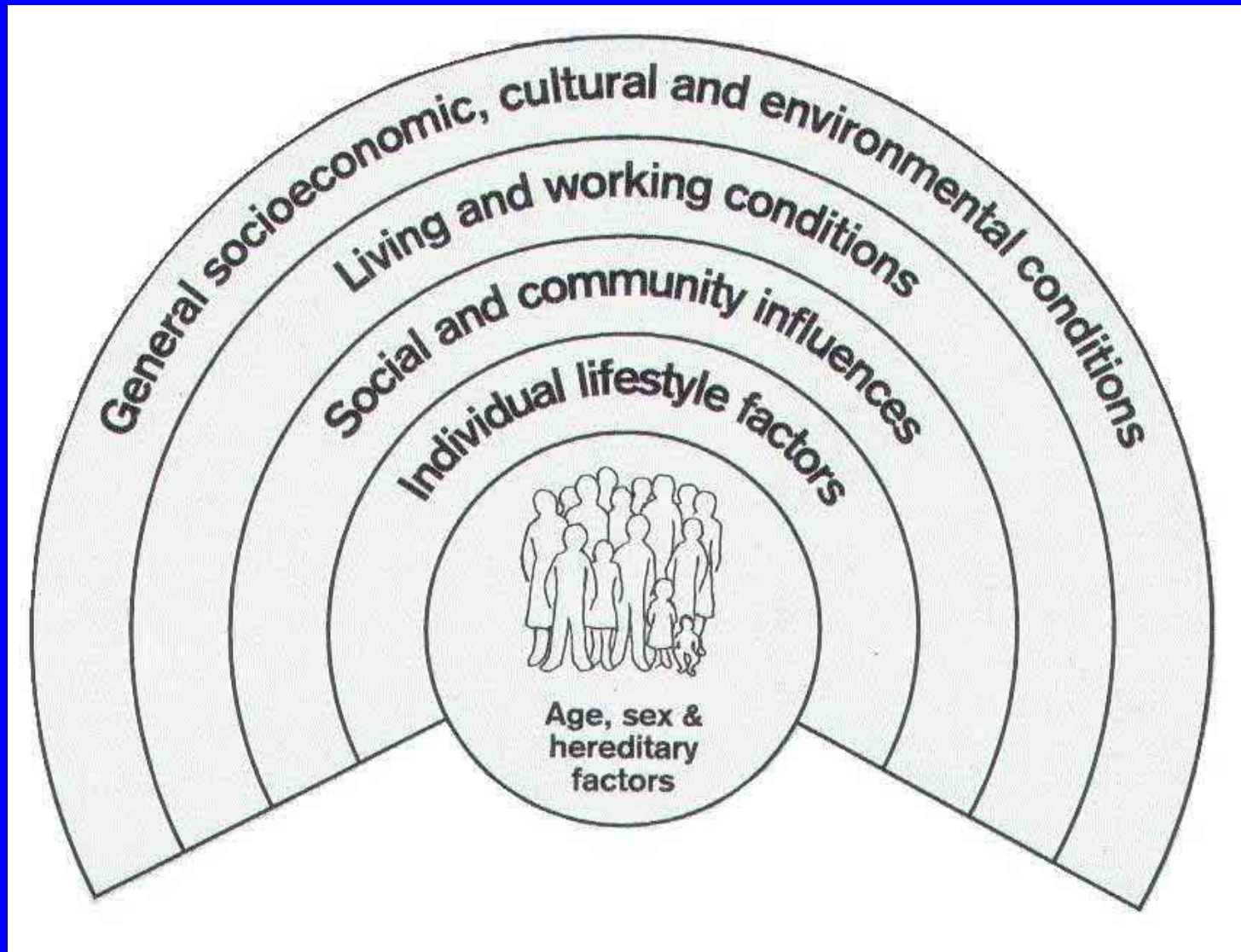
- Cardiovascular diseases
- Injury
- Alcohol
- Emerging infections

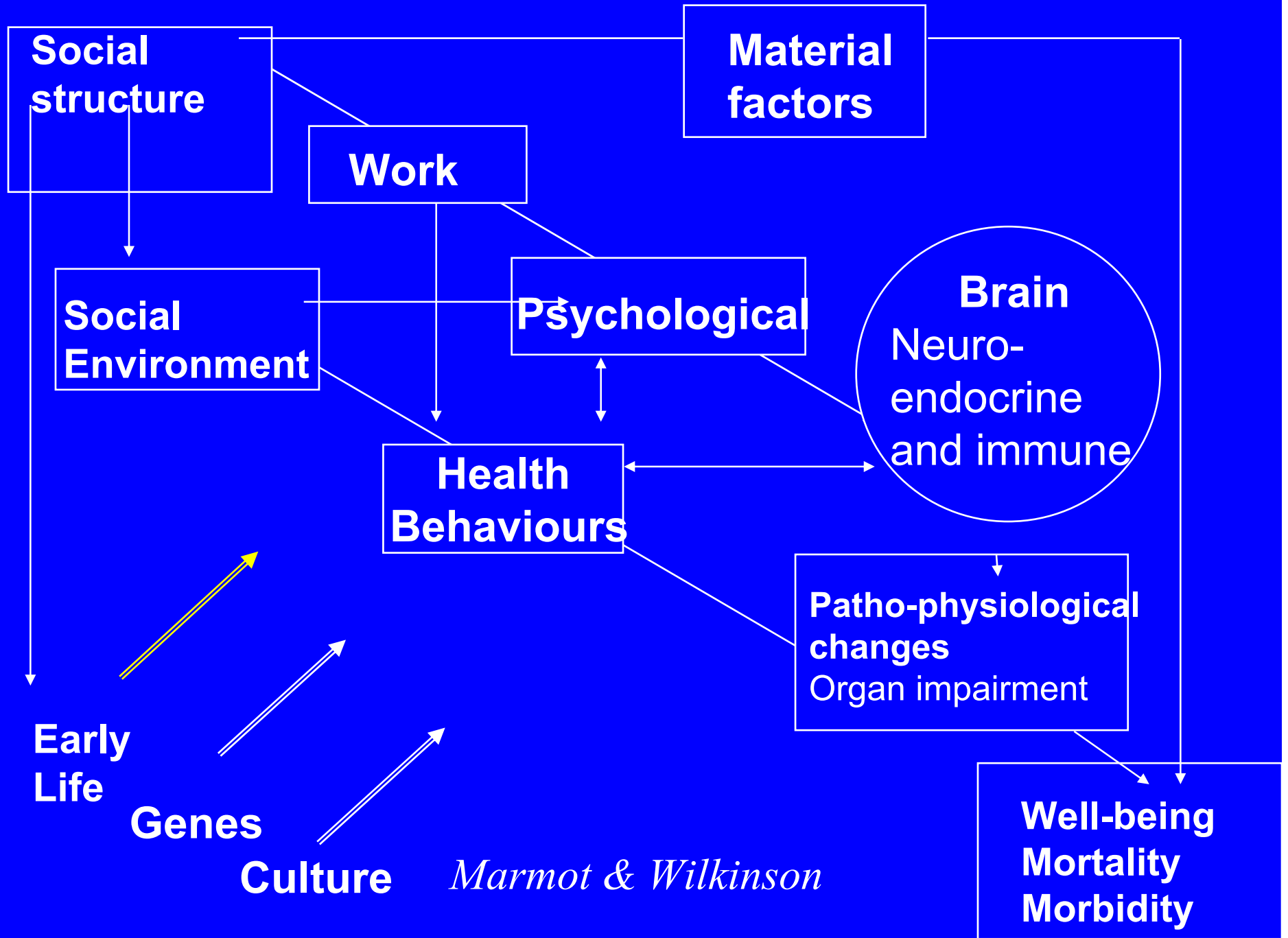
- But not cancer or infant mortality!

Determinants

- *Medical care:* +
- *Behaviours:* +++
- *Pollution:* ±
- *Psychosocial:* +++
- *Socioeconomic:*++++

Determinants of health (*Whitehead & Dahlgren*)





Public health

- “...a process of promoting health, preventing disease, prolonging life and improving the quality of life through the organized efforts of society”.
- No universal structure; differs by country.
- Core functions include:
 - monitoring population health and its determinants;
 - prevention and control of diseases;
 - health promotion;
 - protection of the environment

Sanitary-Epidemiological Service

- Hierarchical
- combined monitoring, inspection, preventive and (sometimes) research functions
- Effective in controlling infections
- Not so effective in
 - controlling chronic diseases
 - changing health behaviours
 - adopting multi-sectoral approach

Reforms after 1990

- Different in each country
- Some decentralisation
- Changes in responsibilities
- Problems with funding and staff
- Adoption of health promotion strategies
- Attempts to establish multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral approach
- Improvements in the information base
- Improvements in environmental health

Factors enabling and obstructing improvement

- Overall macro-economic situation
- The inherited system
- General attitude to public health
- Training
- Lack of multi-sectoral approach

Policy options (Feachem & Preker 1991)

- Preserve the good (eg control of infections)
- Attack the bad (priorities differ by country)
- Protect the budget
- Reform the institutions
- Train in public health
- Adopt multi-sectoral approach