



**Unveiling
Recovery
Pathways: A
Comparative
Study of the UK,
Sweden, and
Balkan
Countries**
Sweden, 20.06.2023
Mulka Nisic

SECTION 1: WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT RECOVERY?

ACUTE CARE MODEL



CHRONIC CARE MODEL



Definitions

“... a voluntarily maintained lifestyle characterized by sobriety, personal health and citizenship”.

(Betty Ford Institute Consensus Panel, 2007)

“The process of recovery from problematic substance use is characterized by voluntarily-sustained control over substance use which maximizes health and wellbeing and participation in the rights, roles and responsibilities of society.”

(Drug Policy Commission Recovery Consensus Group, UK, 2008)

“... the experience (a process and sustained status) through which individuals, families, and communities impacted by severe alcohol and other drug (AOD) problems utilize internal and external resources to voluntarily resolve these problems, heal the wounds inflicted by AOD-related problems, actively manage their continued vulnerability to such problems, and develop a healthy, productive, and meaningful life.”

(White, 2007, p.236)

Recovery enablers - Humphreys and Lembke (2013)

Three key areas of clear evidence-based models for recovery:

- RECOVERY HOUSING
- MUTUAL AID
- PEER DELIVERED INTERVENTIONS
 - Peer models are successful because they provide the personal direction, encouragement and role modelling necessary to initiate engagement and then to support ongoing participation

What enables recovery change?



Connectedness

- Peer support and social groups
- Relationships
- Support from others
- Community



Hope

- Belief in recovery
- Motivation to change
- Hope-Inspiring relationships
- Positive thinking and valuing effort
- Having dreams and aspirations



Identity

- Rebuilding positive sense of identity
- Overcoming stigma



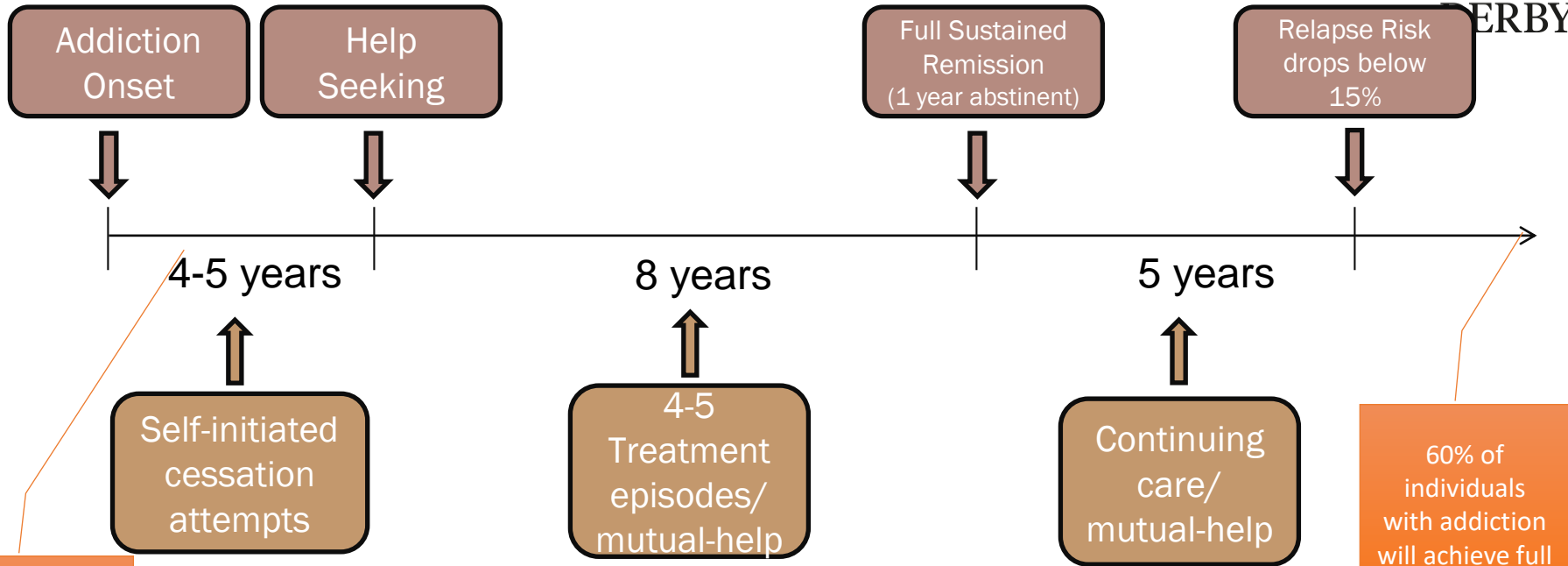
Meaning

- Meaning in mental health experience
- Meaningful life and social roles
- Meaningful life and social goals



Empowerment

- Personal responsibility
- Control over life
- Focusing upon strengths

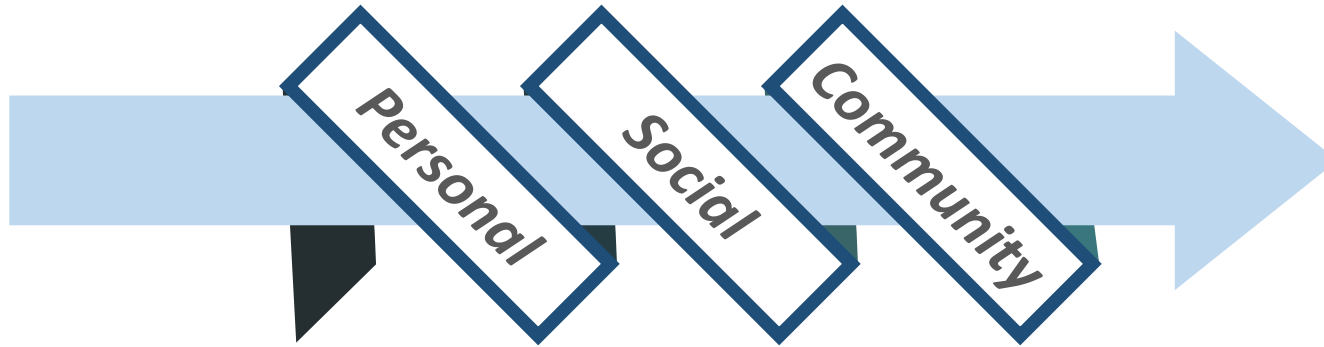


Opportunity for earlier detection through screening in non-specialty settings like primary care/ED

For more severely dependent individuals...
course of dependence and achievement of stable recovery
can take a long time...

60% of individuals with addiction will achieve full sustained remission (White, 2013)

Recovery Capital



PERSONAL

Self-esteem
Self-efficacy
Communication Skills
Coping Skills Resilience

SOCIAL

Positive Friendship Networks
Commitment To Those Networks
Prosocial peers

COMMUNITY

Attitudes, perceptions and actions of the
community
Access To Recovery Treatment
Access To Recovery Coaches
Jobs , Houses, Community Supports

Best and Laudet (2010)

“The breadth and depth of internal and external resources that can be drawn upon to initiate and sustain recovery from severe AOD problems”

Granfield and Cloud (1999)

Strategy to enhance recovery: building an inclusive city

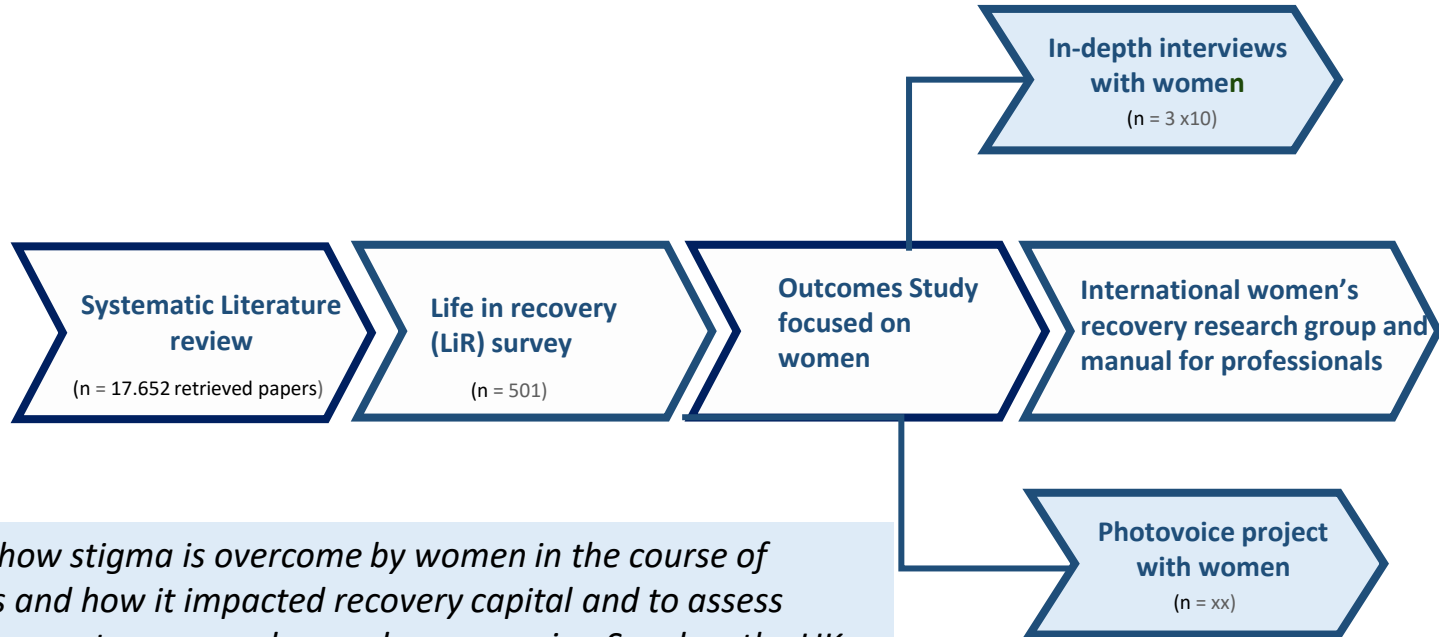


20 Cities Internationally have become Inclusive Recovery Cities

Different stakeholders working together

- City council
- Public & private organisations
- Criminal justice actors & treatment providers
- People in recovery, Families & friends
- Citizens

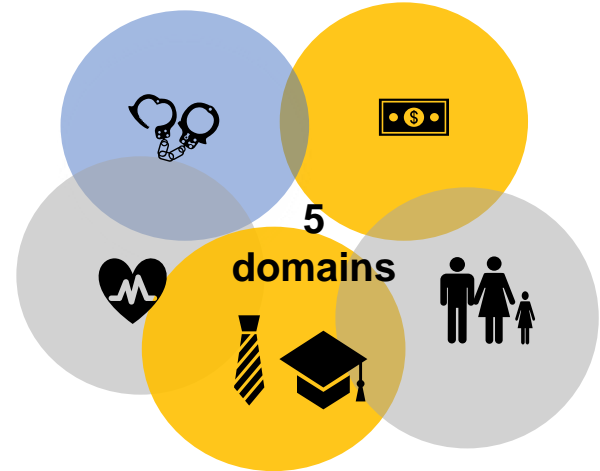
Stigma around addiction recovery in Sweden, the UK and the Balkans - a social justice issue



Aim: to examine how stigma is overcome by women in the course of recovery journeys and how it impacted recovery capital and to assess variations in pathways to recovery by gender, comparing Sweden, the UK and 4 Balkan countries

Background to LIR

- Faces and Voices of Recovery (2013): 3228 participants
- Australian Life In Recovery (2015): 573 participants
- EU Life In Recovery (2018): 1313 participants
- Sweden, the UK, the Balkans (2022-23): 610 participants
- Primary motive is to challenge exclusion and stigma
- And to start to measure change



SECTION 2: RECOVERY IN SWEDEN

Life In Recovery in Sweden



58.2%



40.9%

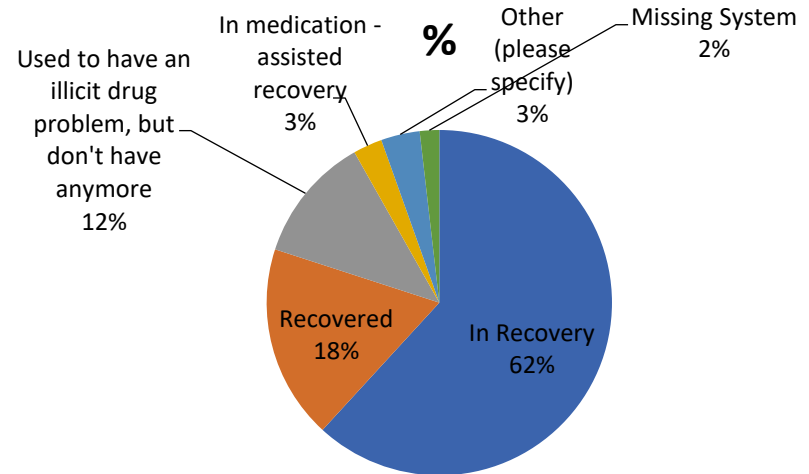
Details of participants

- 64 (58.2%) female. 40.9% male
- High levels of polydrug use
- Mean onset age of any drug use 13.5 illicit drug use was around 14.5 years
- 31.8%, identified as single and had never been married. 24.5% reported cohabitation without marriage, 18.2% identified as married

Life in Recovery Survey in Sweden

Perceived status:

- In Recovery (64.6%)
- Used to have a problem (9.8%)
- Recovered (7.0%)
- Medication assisted recovery (3.0%)



Swedish Life in Recovery

Age

- the largest group (30.91%) were aged between 30-39 years,
- the 40-49 age group (24.55%), the 50-59 age group (21.82%), the 21-29 age group (12.73%), and the 60 years or older group (6.36%), while the smallest group (2.73%) consisted of participants who were 70 years or older.

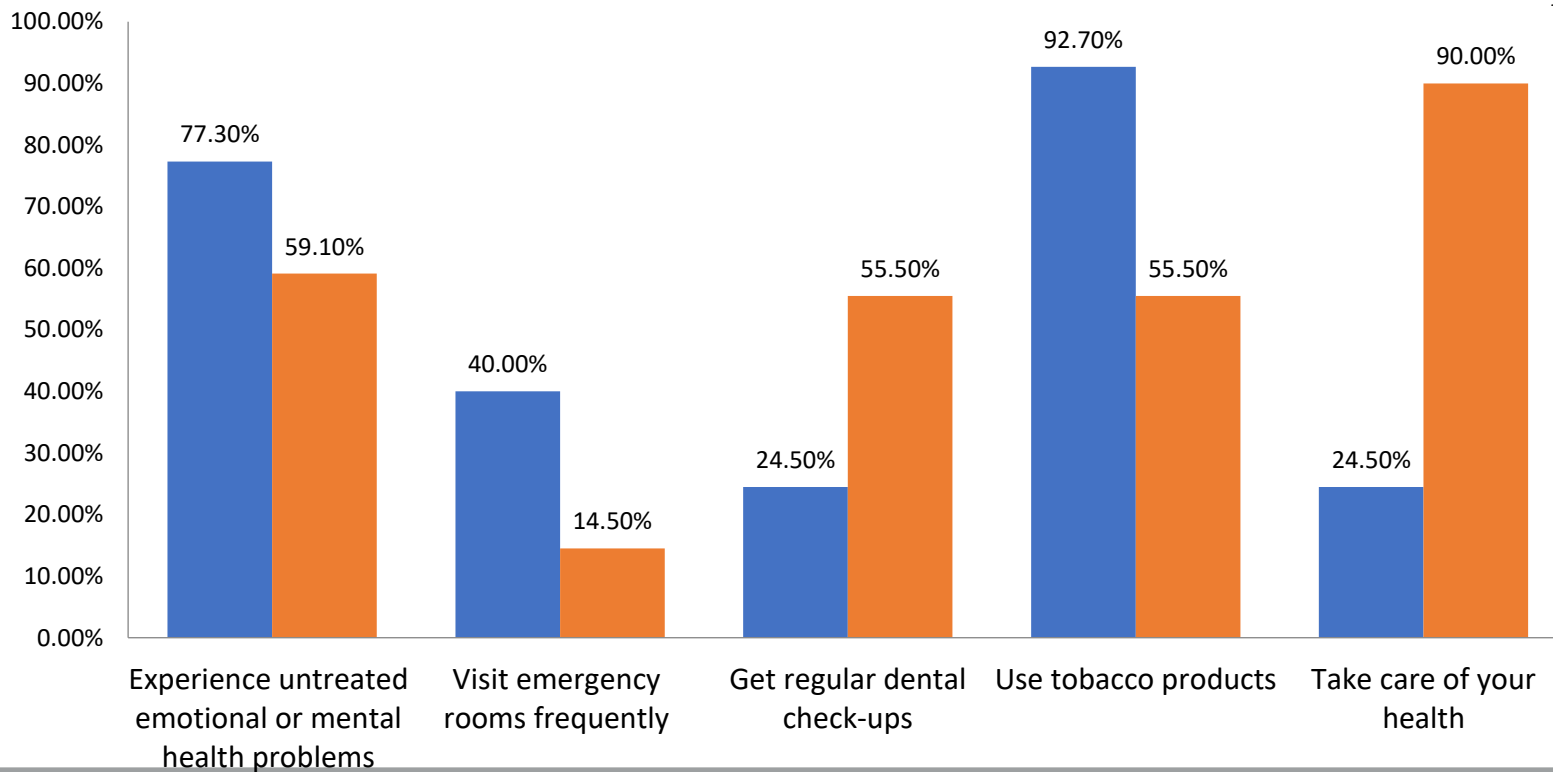
Reasons for help-seeking

- 30.01% reported **poly-drug use**
- 25.45% reported **Amphetamine**
- 20% reported **Alcohol**
- 10.91% reported **Prescription drugs**
- 7.27% reported **Cocaine**
- 6.36% reported **Cannabis**

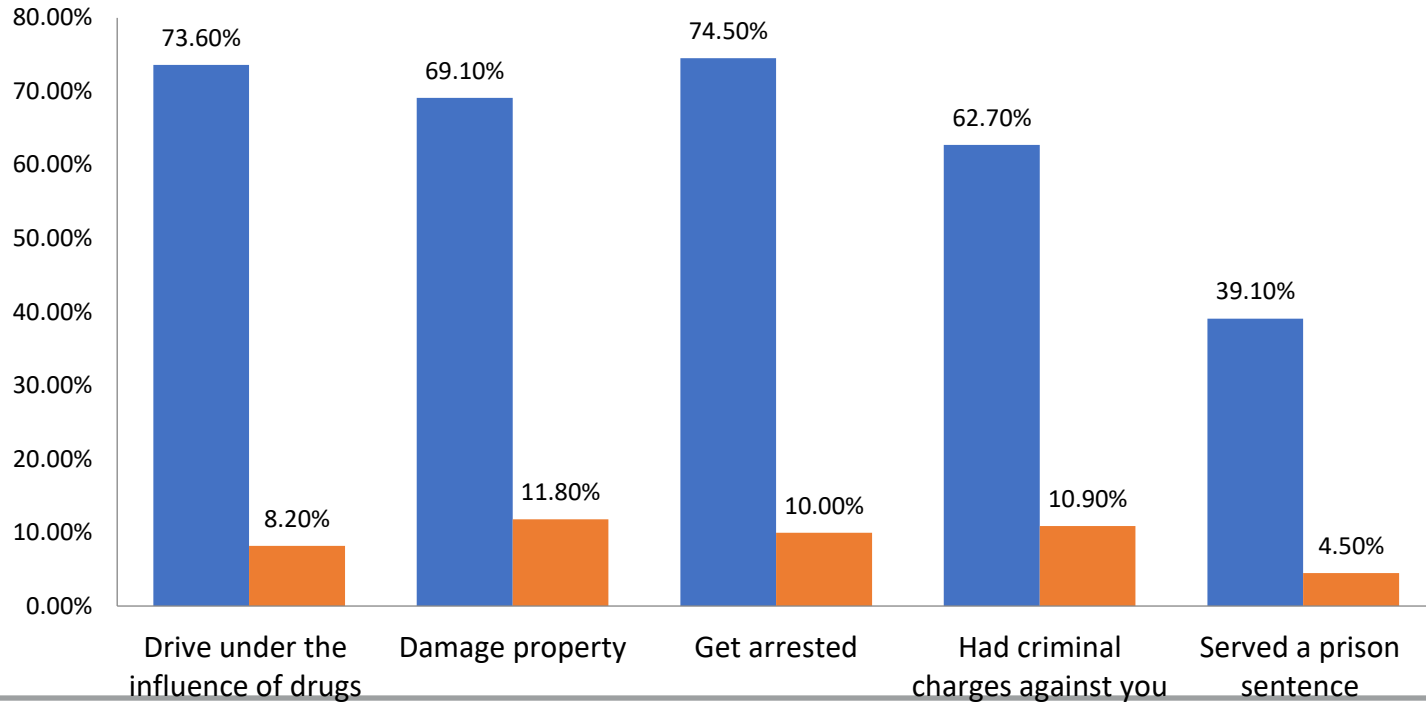
Sources of lifetime help-seeking

Residential Rehab, TC or Detox	80.9%
12-step	70%
Specialist out-patient treatment	57.3%
PBRSS- Peer based recovery support services	30.9%
Other service (such as a church)	13.6%

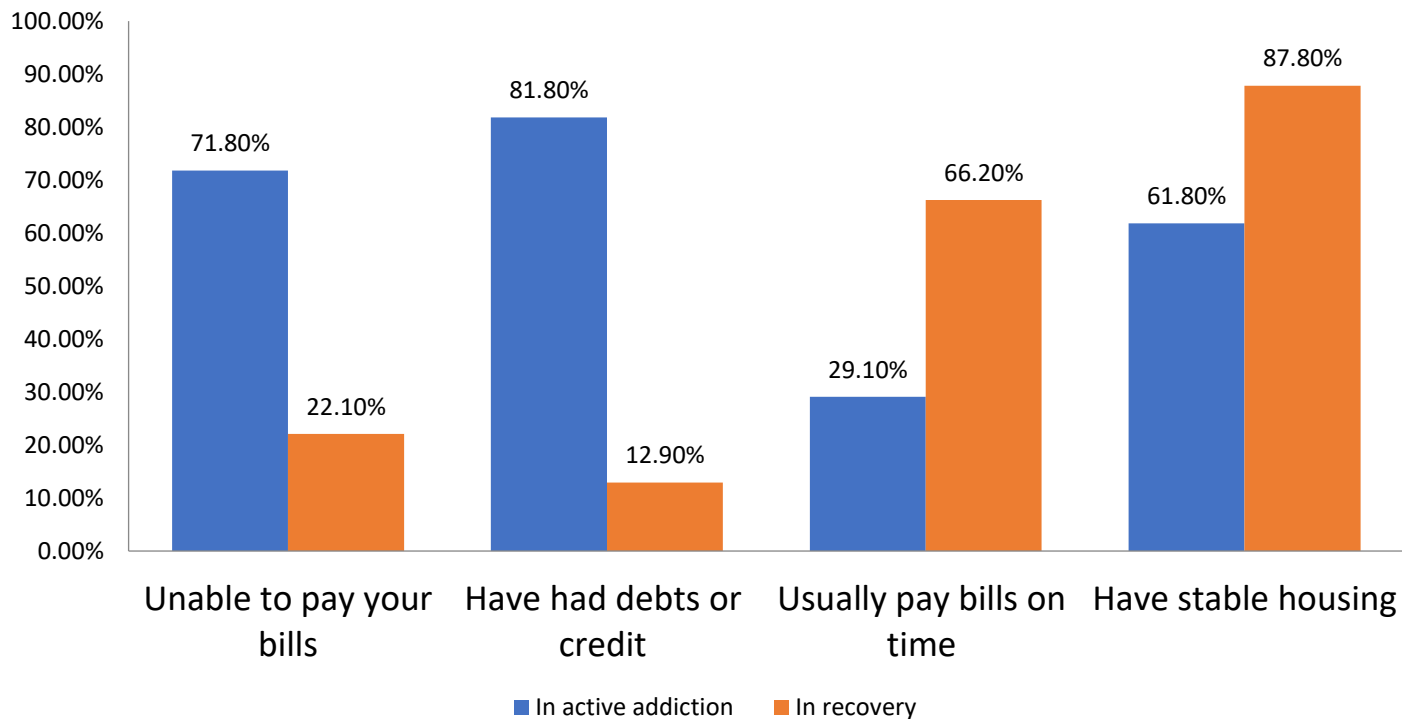
Health



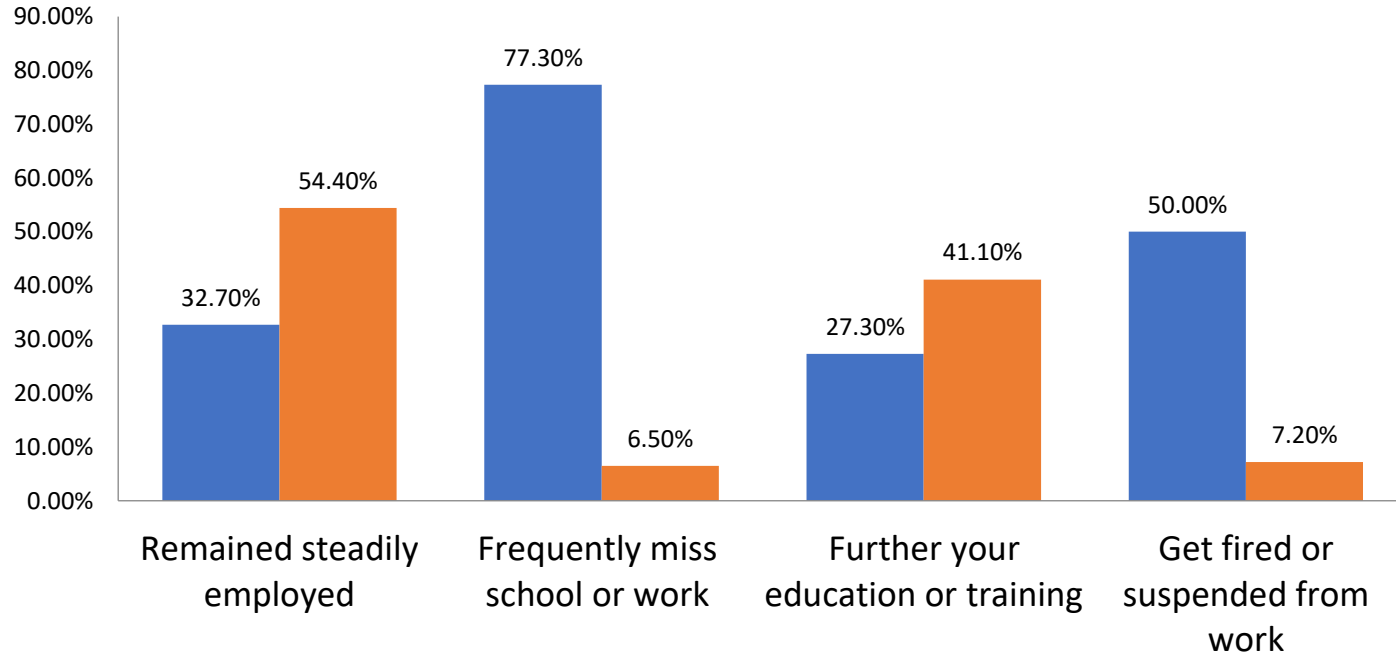
Criminal Justice



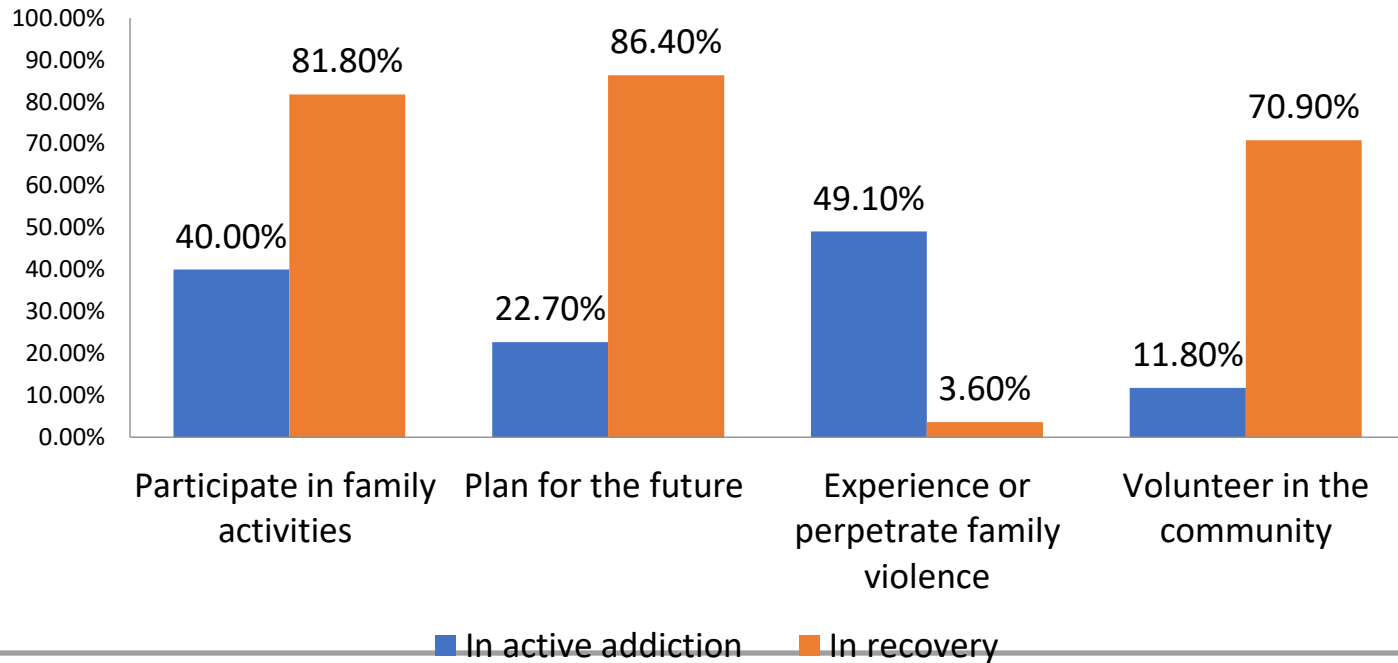
Financial factors



Employment and education



Family and social life



54.4 % of people in long-term recovery have remained steadily employed during their recovery, compared to **32.7 % in active addiction**



70.9 % of people in long-term recovery have volunteered since beginning their recovery journey.



74.5% in active addiction reported getting arrested during this time. **10 % of those in long-term recovery** reported being arrested.

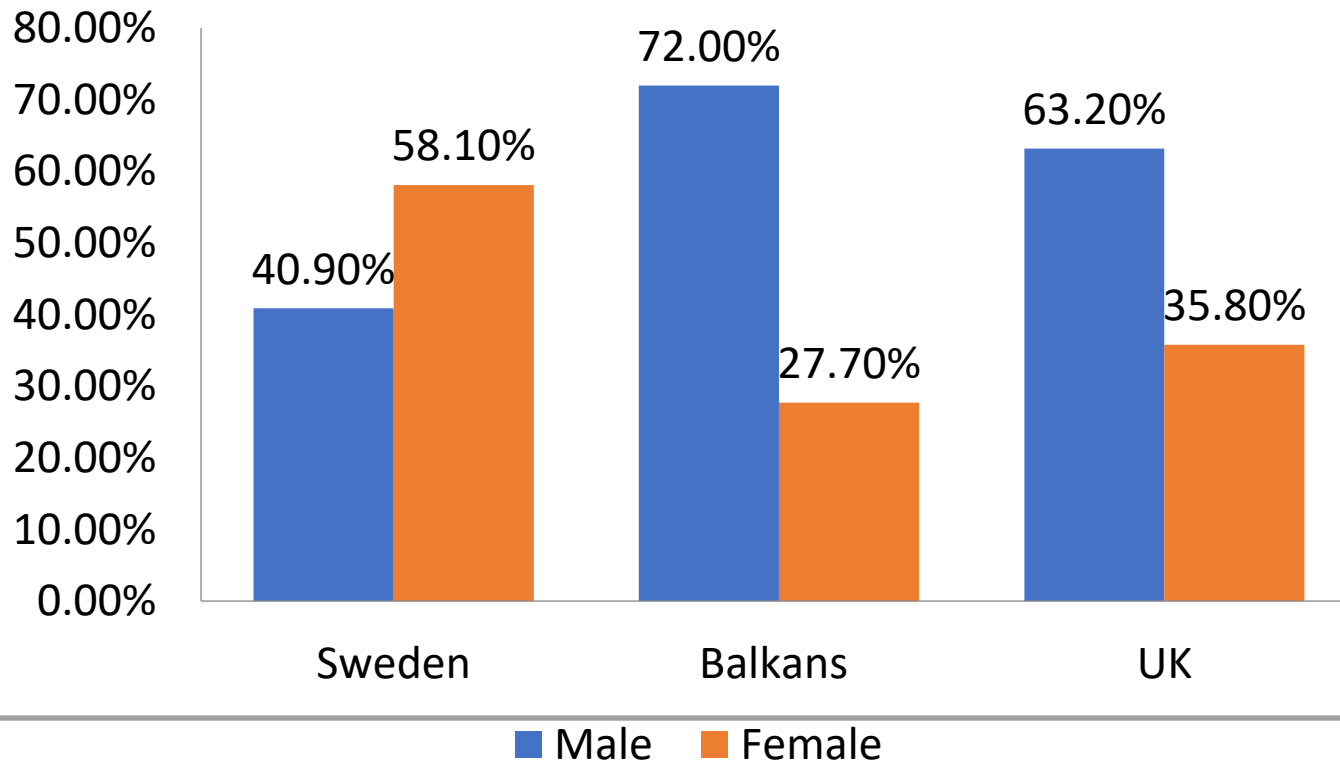


SECTION 3: RECOVERY BY COUNTRY

Country of residence

Country	Sample
Sweden	110
Balkans ^[1]	300
UK ^[2]	201
Total	611

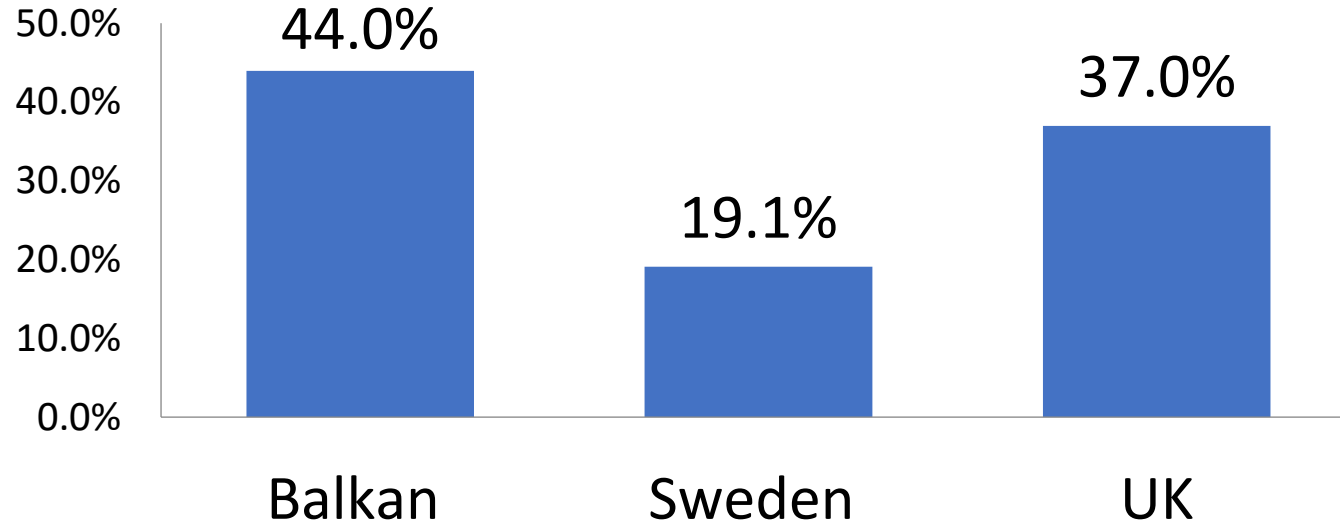
Gender by country



Help-seeking histories

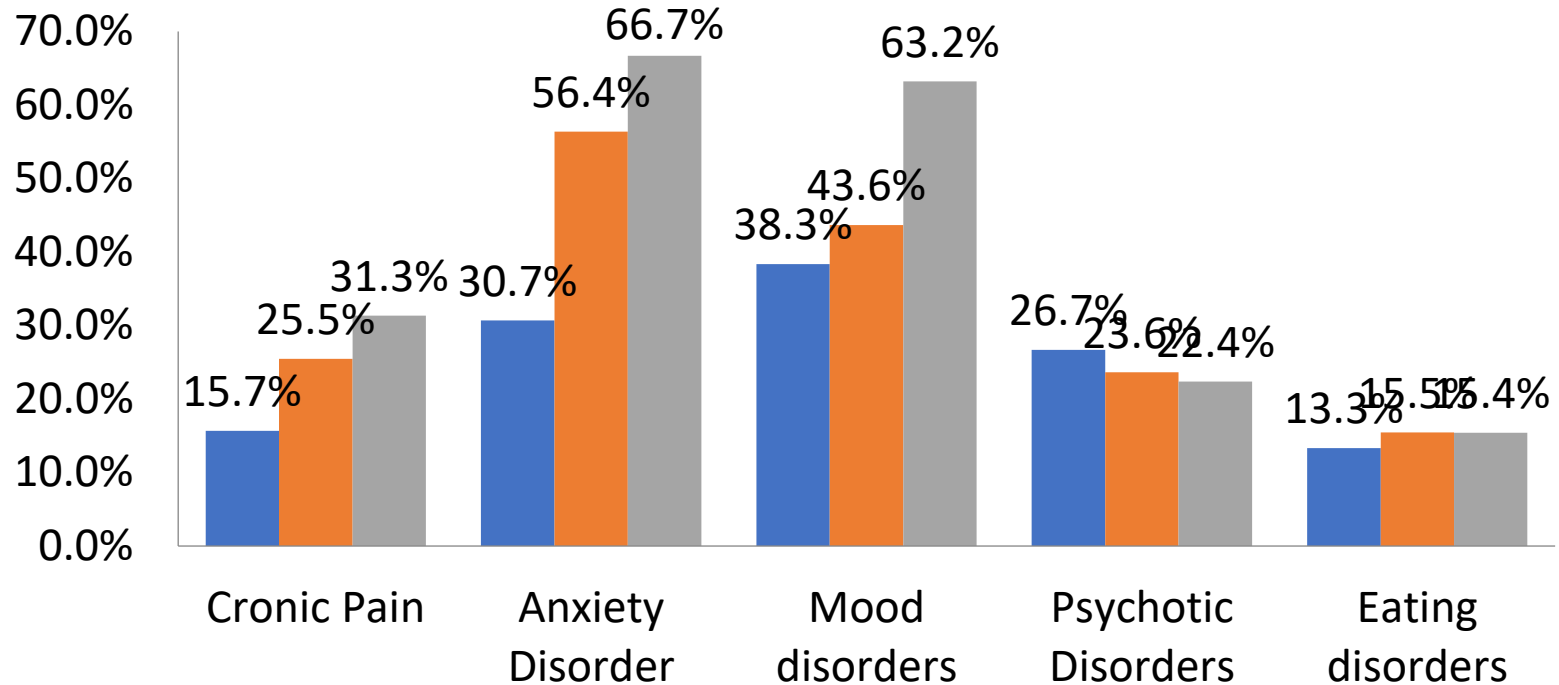
	Sweden	UK	Balkan	chi
12-step fellowship	70.0%	78%	13%	240.27***
Peer-based recovery support	30.9%	57%	25.3%	53.74***
Res. Rehab or TC	80.9%	73%	91%	28.46***
Specialist out-patient	57.3%	61%	73%	12.54***
Other such as church	13.6%	29.5	21.7%	10.57***

Quit attempts



■ Have you ever had an unsuccessful quit attempt?

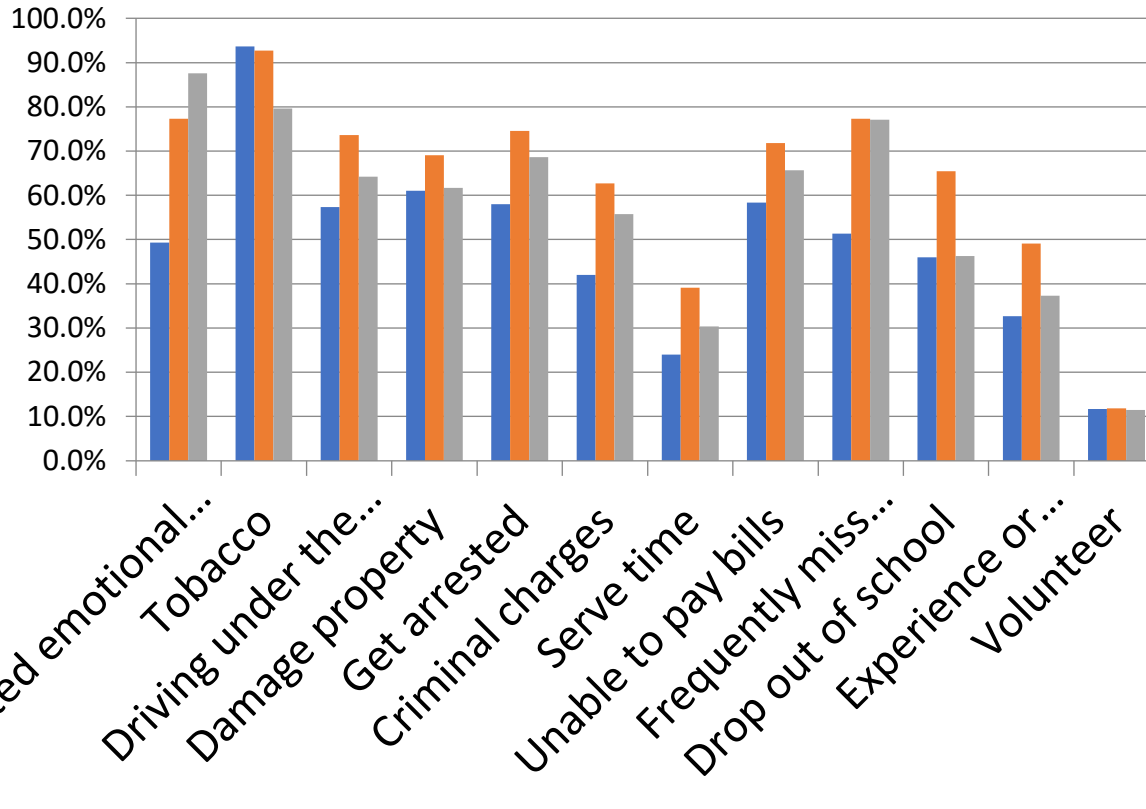
Quit attempts



Co-occurring health issues ?

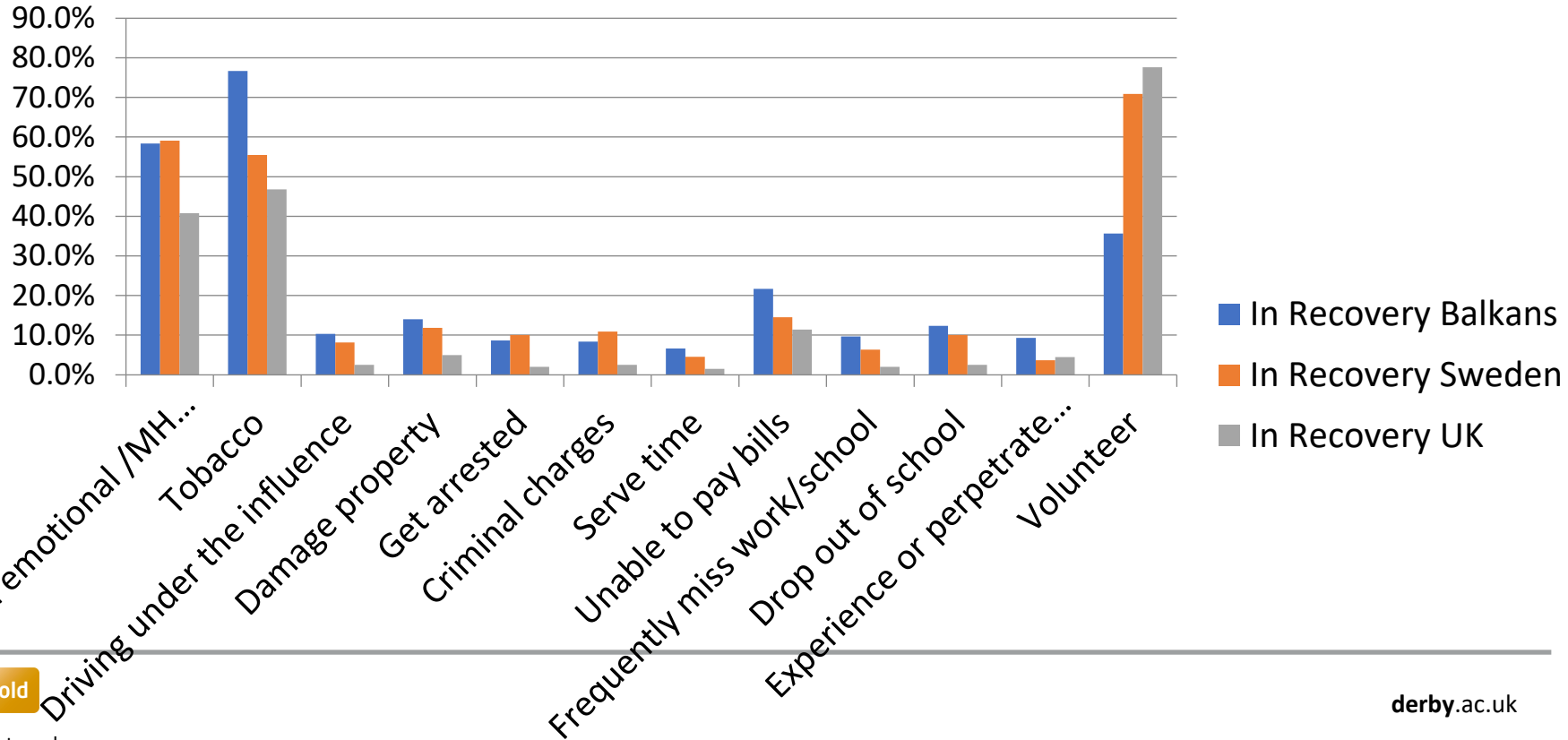
	Balkan	Sweden	UK	chi
Chronic Pain	15,7%	25,5%	31,3%	17.55***
Anxiety Disorder	30,7%	56,4%	66,7%	67.18***
Mood disorders	38,3%	43,6%	63,2%	30.59***
Psychotic Disorders	26,7%	23,6%	22,4%	1.27***
Eating disorders	13,3%	15,5%	15,4%	0.547***

Comparison across five domains in addiction



- In active addiction Balkans
- In active addiction Sweden
- In active addiction UK

Comparison across five domains in recovery



SECTION 4: ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

Comparison across ACE



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	Balkan	Sweden	UK	260,56
Did a parent or other <u>adult in the household</u> often or very often... Swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you? or Act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?	36,8%	32,7%	49,8%	
Did a parent or other <u>adult in the household</u> often or very often... Push, grab, slap, or throw something at you? or Ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?	26,1%	20,9%	40,3%	321,37
Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever... Touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way? or Attempt or actually have oral or anal intercourse with you?	11,4%	26,4%	30,3%	387,38
Did you often or very often feel that ... No one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special? or Your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?	36,5%	45,5%	56,7%	235,8
Did you often or very often feel that ... You didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you? or Your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed	25,1%	20,0%	23,4%	377,106
Was a biological parent ever lost to you through <u>divorced, abandonment</u>, or other reason?	37,8%	49,1%	48,3%	273,09
Was <u>your mother or stepmother</u> : Often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her? or Sometimes, often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard? or Ever repeatedly hit over at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?	22,7%	14,5%	27,4%	376,16
Did you live with anyone who was a <u>problem drinker or alcoholic or who used street drugs</u>?	42,1%	53,6%	53,7%	271,03
Was a household member <u>depressed or mentally ill</u>? or Did a household member <u>attempt suicide</u>?	27,8%	42,7%	40,3%	308,12
Did a household member go to prison?	18,7%	23,6%	15,4%	404,69

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Sensitivity: Internal

SECTION 5: CONCLUSIONS

What is different about recovery in Sweden?

- Much more strongly female sample
- Far less use of mutual aid and peer community support; Greater use of residential treatment
- Most people use various treatment mechanisms before achieving recovery
- Far higher rates of criminal justice involvement and family violence during active addiction, but not so much higher in recovery
- But still consistently strong positive changes in all of the domains assessed

Overall conclusion

- People in recovery are better than well
- Boosting the local economy and reducing benefits costs
- Provides hope for individuals and families affected by addiction, and help inform professionals seeking to assist them
- Inform professionals seeking to assist them
- Overcoming addiction is not solely the preserve of the **individual**
- **Central role for mutual aid groups and individuals' lived experiences**
- These findings are a landmark for policy makers

**Thank you for your
attention!**

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