



European
Commission



Joint Research Centre

the European Commission's
in-house science service

Recent developments and publications

Sandra Caldeira

Joint Meeting of the High Level Group
on Nutrition and Physical Activity and
the EU Platform for Action on Diet,
Physical Activity and Health

6 April 2016, Brussels, BE

Disclaimer: This presentation and its contents do not constitute an official position of the European Commission or any of its services. Neither the European Commission nor any person acting on behalf of the Commission is responsible for the use which might be made of this presentation or its contents

Final Report by the Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity

- Calls for high-level action to reverse the rising trend of children aged under 5 years becoming overweight and obese.



Required: government commitment and leadership, long-term investment and engagement of the whole of society

A set of recommendations grouped in 6 main areas

<http://www.who.int/end-childhood-obesity/final-report/en/>

UN-General Assembly proclaims the Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016-2025

The 193-member General Assembly adopted a consensus resolution on Friday, calling on the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to lead the implementation of the Decade.

Among other topics to be focused on during the Decade will be assistance to the some 159 million children <5 who are stunted and the approximate 50 million who are wasted. Meanwhile, around the world, about 1.9 billion people are overweight, of whom 600 million are obese.

"This resolution places nutrition at the heart of sustainable development and recognizes improving food security and nutrition are essential to achieving the entire 2030 Agenda," FAO DG José Graziano da Silva

Latest report from the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) study

- Information about the health, well-being, social environment and health behaviour of 11-, 13- and 15-year-old boys and girls in 42 countries in Europe and North America
- many behavioural patterns that help determine current health status and future health outcomes are established during adolescence.
- Girls are more likely to include fruit and vegetables in their diet while boys are more likely to be physically active
- Growing up unequal: Adolescents from low-affluence families tend to have poorer health, lower life satisfaction, higher levels of obesity and sedentary behaviours, poorer communication with their parents, less social interaction via social media and lower levels of support from friends and family

http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/303438/HSBC-No.7-Growing-up-unequal-FULL-REPORT.pdf?ua=1

"640 million obese worldwide" [NCD Risk Factor Collaboration (NCD-RisC)]

Visuals and data on website: <http://www.ncdrisc.org/>

- -> on adiposity
- -> on diabetes from 7 April onwards -> **World Health Day 2016: Beat diabetes**

Two new publications:

- The weight of the world - trends in adult BMI in 200 countries: pooled 1,698 population-based measurement studies with 19.2 million participants. Global age-standardised mean BMI increased by more than 2 units from 1975 to 2014 in both men (2014 - 24.2 kg/m²) and women (2014 - 24.4 kg/m²) *Lancet 2016, 387: 1377-96*
- Worldwide trends in diabetes since 1980: pooled analysis of 751 population-based measurement studies with over 4.4 million participants. The number of adults with diabetes in the world increased from 108 million in 1980 to 422 million in 2014, *Lancet 2016, 387: 1513-30.*

New Nutrient Profile Model launched by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)

- To support policy-makers in PAHO Member States to develop "fiscal and other types of policies and regulations to prevent the consumption of unhealthy foods, including front-of-package (FOP) labelling and Regional nutrition guidelines for school food environments (feeding programs and food and beverages sold in schools)."
- Targeted to processed and ultra-processed foods
- Thresholds for excess in alignment with WHO Population Nutrient Intake Goals (PNIGs):
 - Amount of sodium in mg \geq total energy in kcal
 - Amount of energy from free sugars/total/saturated/trans fat $\geq 10/30/10/1\%$ of the total energy;
 - contains other sweeteners
- http://iris.paho.org/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/18621/9789275118733_eng.pdf?sequence=8



Chronic disease Conference 21 April 2016, Brussels, BE

The purpose of the meeting is to set out an approach towards better prevention and management of chronic diseases at EU level, complementary to that agreed to at the international level.

LAUNCH: "The Health Policy Forum Platform"

- http://ec.europa.eu/health/newsletter/169/focus_newsletter_en.htm

Articles in scientific (peer-reviewed) journals

Focus on marketing and advertising (to children)

Television food advertising to children in Malta.

- A majority of advertisements aimed at children are for non-core foods, and are typically shown during family-oriented programmes in the late evening rather than being restricted to children's programmes.
- 'Taste', 'enjoyment' and 'peer status' were the primary persuasive appeals used in adolescent and child-focused advertisements.
- This first content analysis of television advertising in Malta suggests that there is scope for the implementation of statutory regulation regarding advertising of foods high in fat, sugar and salt (HFSS) during times when children are likely to watch television, rather than during children's programmes only.
- Ongoing, systematic monitoring is essential for evaluation of the effectiveness of regulations designed to reduce children's exposure to HFSS food advertising on television.

Health Promot. Int. 2015, [Epub ahead of print]; doi: 10.1093/heapro/dav105

Nutrition and health claims in products directed at children via television in Spain

- Food products classified as core, non-core or miscellaneous, and as healthy or less healthy, according to the United Kingdom Nutrient Profile Model.
- During the 420 hours of broadcasting (2012), 169 food products were advertised: 28.5% in the dairy group and 60.9% in the non-core category.
- A total of 53.3% of products contained nutrition claims and 26.6% contained health claims; 62.2% of the products with claims were of the less healthy category. Low-fat dairy products were the food category containing the highest percentage of health and nutrition claims.
- Over half of all food products marketed to children via television in Spain made some type of nutrition or health claim. Most of these products were less healthy, which could mislead Spanish consumers.

Gac Sanit. 2016 [Epub ahead of print]; <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.gaceta.2016.01.004>

Food advertising towards children and young people in Norway

- Similar to a previous Swedish study, this study shows that Norwegian children and young people were exposed to little advertising for unhealthy food products through media channels such as TV, the Internet, magazines, comics and cinemas.
- Compared with studies from USA, UK and Australia, there are, strong indications that there is significantly less unhealthy food advertising in Scandinavian countries.
- The study also supports critical remarks from some researchers that the extensive use of the "international discourse" as a political argument and recommendation for Norwegian conditions is not accurate.

Appetite. 2016 Mar 1;98:12-8. doi: 10.1016/j.appet.2015.12.008. Epub 2015 Dec 12.

Advertising as a cue to consume: a systematic review and meta-analysis

- To examine the evidence for a relation between “acute exposure to experimental unhealthy food advertising” and food consumption
- Systematic review and meta-analysis of studies in which advertising exposure was experimentally manipulated and food intake measured
- “Acute exposure” to food advertising increases food intake in children but not in adults. These data support public health policy action that seeks to reduce children’s exposure to unhealthy food advertising.

Am J Clin Nutr 2016 [Epub ahead of print]; <http://dx.doi.org/10.3945/ajcn.115.120022>

The role of nutrition labels and advertising claims in altering consumers' evaluation and choice

- Due to increasing number of benefit claims advertising taste or health front of pack (FOP), consumers face the dilemma to trade taste for health.
- this study investigates the health-pleasure trade-off and its effect on 240 EU consumers' choice
- Half of the products carried a nutrition label FOP, reduced fat or reduced sugar. Further, one third of the products carried health benefit claim, one third taste benefit claim, and one third no additional claim FOP. Attention to information and its effect on **experienced taste, health perception and the buying intention** were measured
- the message displayed FOP altered consumers evaluation and choice. The effectiveness of the FOP message further depended on consumers' health motivation and the healthfulness perception of carrier products. Current findings call for the establishment of standards to avoid the use of misleading information FOP

Systematic review: the impact of menu energy labelling across socioeconomic groups

- We aimed to summarise evidence on the effectiveness of menu energy labelling by socioeconomic position (SEP)
- it appears that both high and low SEP groups notice energy labelling, when introduced, however studies comparing awareness between high and low SEP groups suggest that awareness is likely to be greater for individuals with a higher SEP.
- the majority of studies that reported on purchase outcomes for low SEP groups reported no effect of menu energy labelling,
- It is difficult to know whether the absence of effectiveness reported in low SEP populations represents a true lack of effectiveness or is a result of a more general lack of policy effectiveness or the limited quality of the reviewed studies.
- *Review Quality Rating (Health evidenceTM): 7 out of 10 (moderate)*

A systematic literature review of nutrition interventions in vending machines that encourage consumers to make healthier choices

- Intervention settings included schools, universities and workplaces.
- Reducing price or increasing the availability increased sales of healthier choices. The results of point-of-purchase nutrition information interventions were heterogeneous and when measured changes to purchases were small.
- This review offers evidence that pricing and availability strategies are effective at improving the nutritional quality foods and beverages purchased from vending machines. Evidence on how these interventions alter consumer's overall diet or body mass index is needed.
- *Review Quality Rating (Health evidenceTM): 8 out of 10 (strong)*

Obes Rev. 2015, 16:1030-41; <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/obr.12311>

Beverage purchases from stores in Mexico under the excise tax on sugar sweetened beverages

- To test whether the post-tax trend in purchases was significantly different from the pretax trend, the authors used a difference in difference fixed effects model, which adjusts for both macroeconomic variables that can affect the purchase of beverages over time, and pre-existing trends.
- The average volume of taxed beverages purchased monthly was 6% lower in 2014 compared with expected purchases should the tax be absent
- The reductions accelerated reaching 12% in December 2014. Reductions were higher among the households of low socioeconomic status
- Purchases of untaxed beverages increased by 4% mainly driven by an increase in purchases of bottled plain water.

BMJ 2016;352:h6704; <http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmj.h6704>

Sweetening of the global diet, particularly beverages: patterns, trends, and policy responses

- The addition of caloric sweeteners to foods and beverages is linked to an increased risk of a range of cardiometabolic problems. Evidence of the cardiometabolic outcomes of beverages containing low-calorie sweeteners and 100% fruit juice remains inconclusive.
- 68% of packaged foods and beverages available in the USA contain caloric sweeteners, 74% include both caloric and low-calorie sweeteners, and 5% include only low-calorie sweeteners.
- The four regions with the highest consumption are North America, Latin America, Australasia, and western Europe.
- The fastest absolute growth in sales of sugar-sweetened beverages by country in 2009–14 was seen in Chile.

Lancet Diabetes Endocrinol 2016;4: 174–86; [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2213-8587\(15\)00419-2](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2213-8587(15)00419-2)

New data on *trans* fat in foods in Europe

- Stender et al: Sampling of biscuits/cakes/ wafers with 'partially hydrogenated vegetable fat' (or similar) on the list of ingredients in the same retail stores in 6 SE-European countries in 2012 and 2014
- Number of identified products with PHO increased (new products introduced)
- Number of products available on the market that exceeded 2% TFA in fat \approx doubled from 2012-2014
- Authors suggest that findings indicate limited effectiveness of voluntary measures
- BMJ Open 2016;6:e010673. ; <http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2015-010673>

- Costa et al: Total TFA content in the fat in products from various categories sampled in 2013 in PT ranged from 0.06% to 30.2% (average 1.9%)
- The highest average values were calculated for the "biscuits, wafers and cookies" group (3.4% TFA), followed by the pastry group (2.0%).
- 19% of the samples had more than 2% TFA in fat
- Food Control 64 (2016) 128e134; <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.foodcont.2015.12.010>

Special Issue on the SPOTLIGHT project Sustainable Prevention of Obesity Through Integrated Strategies in Europe

- obesity reviews (2016) 17 (Suppl. 1), 5–109
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/obr.v17.S1/issuetoc>
- The SPOTLIGHT project www.spotlightproject.eu
 - systematically define the factors necessary for establishing effective health promotion approaches. Different levels in varying contexts are taken into account - individual, family, organisational, and environments that can change behaviour, lifestyles, and life skills to sustainably reduce obesogenic behaviours in an innovative way.
- Special issue presents a series of articles on topics ranging from the assessment of neighbourhoods and the obesogenic characteristics of the built environment through a virtual audit tool to the relation between sleep duration and physical activity and others

Public Health Policy Support: Nutrition



- visit us @ <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/research-topic/nutrition>
- follow us on twitter @[IHCPNutritionEU](https://twitter.com/IHCPNutritionEU)