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D2.10: First Policy Brief on the effects of implemented policies and policy outputs

World Cancer Research Fund
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Executive Summary

As part of the CO-CREATE project, World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) International is required to write two policy briefs discussing the strength of implemented policies and policy outputs. These aim to support advocacy efforts to promote positive policy responses in the areas of healthy diets and physical activity. This is a report concerning the first of the two briefs; the second brief will be delivered in M60 of the project.

This policy brief introduces the CO-CREATE project and gives an overview of the rates of childhood obesity in the five CO-CREATE countries, alongside a youth-friendly analysis of a range of policies impacting childhood obesity rates. This analysis covers policies from six policy areas (three related to diet and three to physical activity) across all five countries (30 policies in total). The analysis includes the policy names, benchmarking score, description, strengths and/or weaknesses, and a potential action to improve the policy. The brief also includes the policy analysis methodology, quotes from youth, a summary of overarching findings, a comparison of the benchmarking scores, and concludes with resources readers can use to elicit policy change.

The development of the brief has identified a number of development areas for the policy benchmark tool. It has also identified the need to adopt a comprehensive approach when reviewing policies to formulate an overall country score.

The policy brief has been submitted in the form of a draft and may undergo small changes before publishing.

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List of acronyms / abbreviations

CO-CREATE	Confronting Obesity: Co-creating Policy with Youth project
EU	European Union
HBSC	WHO collaborative cross-national survey: Health Behaviour in School-aged Children
HFSS	High in fat, salt and/or sugar
MOVING	the MOVING Framework/database on physical activity policy actions
NCD	Non-Communicable Disease
NOURISHING	the NOURISHING Framework/database on diet and nutrition policy actions
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
WCRF	World Cancer Research Fund
WHO	World Health Organisation
WP	Work-package of the CO-CREATE project

Introduction

As part of the EU-funded project “Confronting Obesity: Co-creating policy with youth”, known as the “CO-CREATE” project, World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) International is responsible for deliverables in Work Package (WP) 2. As part of Deliverable 2.10 (D2.10), WCRF International has developed a policy brief which discusses the strength of implemented policies across the five European countries. This brief aims to support advocacy efforts to promote positive policy responses in the areas of healthy diets and physical activity for youth.

This report discusses the brief’s background, the process involved in developing the policy brief, and outlines the findings, challenges and limitations.

Deliverable description

Deliverable 2.10 is the first policy brief on the effects of implemented policies and policy outputs. It is described as “the first of two policy briefs, summarizing the effects of implemented policies and policy outputs, including comparing and contrasting policy environments across Europe, using the developed policy index.”

Deliverable 2.10 forms part of Task 2.6 which involves the “analysis of impact of implemented policies in Europe”. The task requires WP2 (led by WCRF) to collaborate with WP3-WP7 and WP9 to create and deliver policy briefs based on analyses of the effects of implemented policies, packages of implemented policies, and national levels of overweight and obesity. The task also requires the creation of policy outputs which include the “policy status” of countries across Europe, to support advocacy efforts to promote appropriate policy responses in the areas of healthy diets and physical activity.

Objective of the deliverable

The objective of the deliverable is to produce a policy brief which could be used by youth to advocate for improvements to nutrition and physical activity policies, to assist in reducing rates of overweight and obesity within the European Union.

Background

WCRF International has completed the development of a physical activity policy framework (the MOVING framework) (D2.1), is conducting a comprehensive European policy scan for diet and physical activity (D2.3), and is developing an article on the challenges associated with conducting a global and a targeted in-depth European policy scan for diet and physical activity (D2.4). WCRF International has also already developed a policy benchmark (D2.8) to assess individual policies to ascertain the overall ‘policy status’ of European countries regarding the promotion of healthy diets and physical activity, alongside a physical activity policy database and a web-platform (D2.5 and D2.6) which were submitted in M18.

Deliverable 2.10 requires WCRF International to deliver a policy brief which relies on outputs from D2.3, D2.8, and D2.5 (under Task 2.3 and 2.5) as the information used in this brief builds directly off their results. Some deliverables and tasks are ongoing and are being conducted concurrently, such as the comprehensive European policy scan for diet and physical activity, Task 2.5. Therefore, assessing the overall ‘policy status’ of European countries using the benchmarking tool to complete this policy brief has involved progressing the policy scan and benchmarking alongside the brief itself.

Outlined below is further information on the deliverables used to develop this brief.

Progress on the Comprehensive European Scan (Task 2.3)

Task 2.3 involves performing a comprehensive country-level policy scan for physical activity and diet across European countries which are then added to the NOURISHING and new MOVING databases. The comprehensive policy scans of the five CO-CREATE project countries have to date resulted in 189 policies being identified across the five CO-CREATE countries for the MOVING database. Of these 189, 83 have been verified (as of the 6th of March 2020). However, delays due to personnel recruitment and staff sickness due to COVID-19 resulted in the comprehensive NOURISHING scan only very recently starting. This meant Task 2.3 was temporarily reoriented to scan the five countries within the six selected areas.

Policy benchmark and country indexes (Task 2.5)

The MOVING and NOURISHING policy benchmarks were developed to benchmark policies, giving an overall numerical score to show how strong the policy is. These benchmarks cover national-level physical activity (through MOVING) and nutrition (through NOURISHING) policies. The policy index was submitted to the European Commission in M16. The policy indexes are structured around the NOURISHING and MOVING policy areas, with each policy area having its own set of criteria.

Benchmarking a policy involves scoring the policy against a set of criteria (listed as “tiers”, and the number of these range between three and five), thereby allowing a policy to be given a numerical value based on how successfully it fulfilled those criteria. For example, the NOURISHING policy benchmark N2.3 focuses on fruit and vegetables in schools (below). It has four total tiers it is scored

against; within tier one, the possible scores are 0-2; tier two is 0-3; tier three is 1-2; and tier four is 1-3. Therefore, if a policy most closely matches the highest scoring attributes within the tiers of N2.3, it would have a maximum score of 10.

N2.3 Policy benchmark for fruit and vegetable initiatives in schools

No.	Overall policy area	Benchmark	Indicator	Scale				
				Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 5
N2.3	Offer healthy food and set standards in public institutions and other specific settings	Fruit & vegetable initiatives in schools	National government supports initiatives for schools to implement fruit and vegetable initiatives.	0- none 1- voluntary initiative 2- mandatory initiative	0- user pays 1- subsidised 3- free	1- primary or secondary school only 2- primary and secondary school	1-yes and the instrument explicitly includes at least one of the following criteria: a-monitoring and evaluation provisions specified b-funding sources identified c-enforcement provisions specified 2-yes and the instrument explicitly includes at least has two of the following criteria: a-monitoring and evaluation provisions specified b-funding sources identified c-enforcement provisions specified 3-yes and the instrument explicitly includes all of the following criteria: a-monitoring and evaluation provisions specified b-funding sources identified c-enforcement provisions specified	N/A

Developing a country-score involves undertaking a country-scan to identify and verify the policy, then using the benchmarking tool to score it in line with the relevant benchmarking criteria. Whilst the final coding schema has not yet been agreed, the tool anticipates that the policies scored within that country then have their scores totalised, and ranked against the scores of other countries in similar policy areas. This will allow for a comparison of the strength of policies across countries.

Collaboration among partners

This brief involved collaboration with a range of other WPs. This included support from WP9 (World Obesity Federation) with the design of the brief and future dissemination, and from WP4 (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine) and WP5 (Universiteit van Amsterdam) for their provision of youth quotes. It is anticipated that WP6 will use the briefing as pre-reading for its policy dialogue forums.

Description of activities

The following processes were undertaken to deliver the policy brief.

1. Five countries were selected to be analysed in the brief

The chosen countries were selected where youth had been undertaking activities relating the CO-CREATE project. These countries are the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, and the UK.

Furthermore, the five countries involved in the CO-CREATE project have the best level of information available due to the concurrent work in the country policy scan and policy benchmarking.

2. Country obesity data for children was identified

Data on the levels of overweight and obesity among children was collected for each of the five selected countries. This data was collected from the most recentⁱ comprehensive Health Behaviour in School Aged Children Study; this was the 2016 International Report, *Growing up unequal: gender and socioeconomic differences in young people's health and wellbeing*¹ based off the 2013/14 survey. This study was chosen as it has most up to date data collected consistently across the five countries². (As the study does not collect data for the United Kingdom as a whole, data has been included from England, Scotland and Wales. There is no data from Northern Ireland).

For the purposes of this brief, the data collected from 15-year-olds was used as this was deemed to be the most relevant to the project target group of youth.

3. Quotes from youth alliances per country were sourced

All youth alliance WP leaders were invited to supply quotes on youth perspectives on obesity to include the voice of youth in the brief. Two work packages supplied quotes which were included in the brief. The quotes were taken from field notes of youth alliance meetings and were anonymised.

4. Six policy areas were chosen to be compared

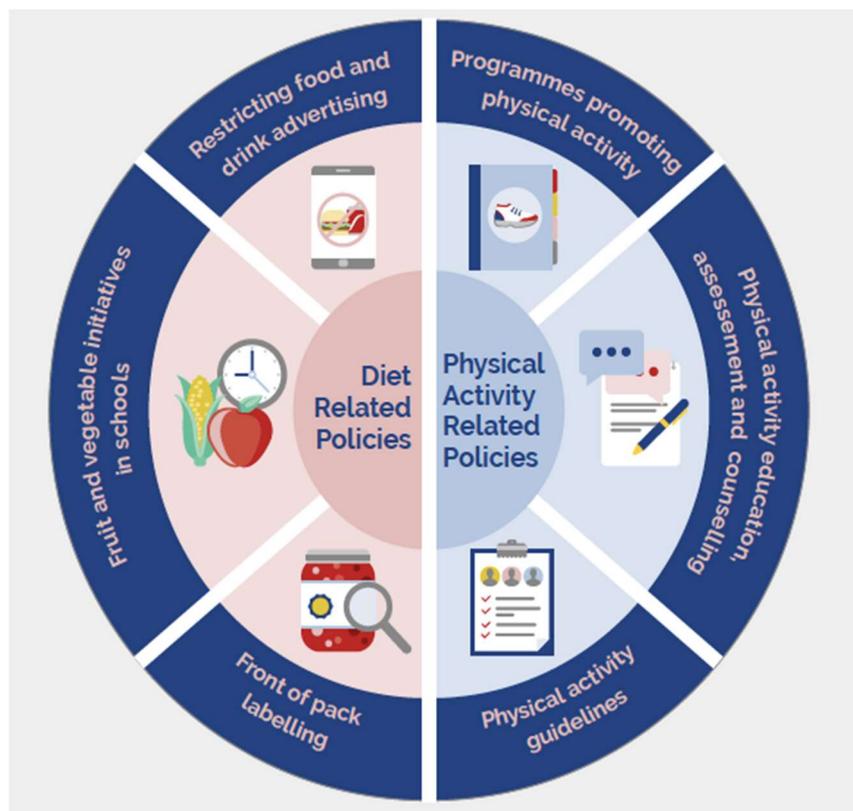
Overall, six policy areas were chosen so the results would be comparable.

Of six areas included, three were diet related policies from WCRF International's NOURISHING policy framework, and three were physical activity related from WCRF International's new MOVING policy framework. Within these two frameworks, the six areas were selected due to their focus on youth (e.g. policies involving schools) and their alignment with WHO's Best Buys. The areas were only selected if all five countries had a policy in that area to review.

ⁱ Data from the most recent Health Behaviour in School Aged Children Study was used. A survey was also undertaken in 2018, however only the results for Scotland have been published. The full report is due to be published in May 2020.

Below is an infographic showing the two policy areas, diet-related policies and physical activity related policies, and the three policy areas chosen from each.

Figure 1: Policy areas



5. Thirty policies were selected

WCRF International's existing NOURISHING² policy database, and soon to be launched MOVING policy database, were searched for one policy within the six policy areas per country. Thirty policies were selected for analysis, half from the NOURISHING and half from the MOVING policy database.

6. A benchmarking tool graded the policies and generated country results

The policies identified were then scored using the policy benchmarking tool and key strengths and weaknesses were identified.

From the collected benchmarking scores, a table was developed which allowed country results to be displayed. Due to the nature of the benchmarking scoring process (different policies have different total scores due to the range of scales) the scores were also displayed as a percentage so they would be comparable. The results were disaggregated so individual policies across countries can be compared, as well as compare overall country trends.



7. Country scorecards were prepared

The results were displayed in a country scorecard which included a short summary of each policy, their benchmark score, and information about how the policy could be improved

8. World Obesity Federation (WP9) designed the brief

World Obesity Federation designed the brief to be clear, engaging, user friendly and suitable for a range of users including youth, policy makers, politicians and policy advocates. The brief is designed for online dissemination.

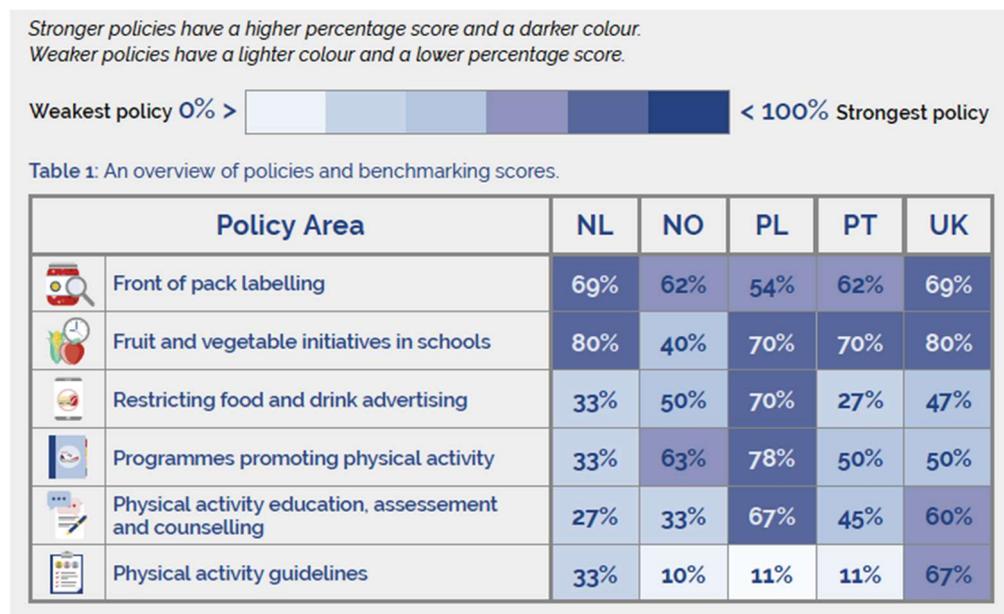
Results

The attached document *Addressing childhood obesity across Europe: a review of a sample of diet and physical activity policies from the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal and the United Kingdom*.

Discussion

Analysis of findings

Undertaking this analysis led to findings which showed the strengths and weaknesses of various policies across five countries. By comparing the strength of these policies, we can see that overall, the UK sample of policies are the strongest. However, they still have room for significant improvement; even the strongest policy did not score higher than 80%. There was also a large range of scores across policies, for example, within physical activity guidelines we see a range of scores, from 67% (UK) to a low of 10% (Norway). This shows that policies within the same topic are implemented very differently across Europe, with some policy areas in particular having weaker overall policies. For example, physical activity guidelines had lower scores, when compared to the higher scores across fruit and vegetable initiatives in schools. Below is a table, provided also in the policy brief, which illustrates these findings.

Figure 2: Results of the policy benchmarking

The benchmarking results also make for interesting reading when compared to rates of overweight and obesity in a country. Our results found the UK had, on average, the strongest policies based on the sample of selected policies. This was followed by Poland, the Netherlands, Portugal then Norway. However, rates of childhood obesity do not follow this trend. The country with the lowest rates of obesity is the Netherlands, followed by Poland, Norway, the UK, then Portugal.

Encouraging policy co-creation

The brief is presented in a way that seeks to encourage and inspire co-creation activities to shape the policy environment.

This was done in a variety of ways. The brief provides a sample of policies with recommendations for action; this introduces the concept of policies and how they can shape their environment. This information was presented by country, in the form of a scorecard; having one card per country allows youth to quickly identify the areas relevant to them.

The scorecard conveys a succinct summary of the individual policies, and how they could be improved. This information is easily interpretable and provides advice on how to improve the policies within their home countries. The scorecards also show the “score” of the policy as collected from the benchmarking tool; this score was presented as a percentage for score comparability.

Figure 3: Scorecard for Norway

Norway		policy summaries	potential ways to improve the policy summarised
Diet Related Policies			
	The Keyhole Logo (2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Keyhole Logo used in Norway has positive qualities such as its interpretive element. However, it only highlights the healthy aspects of the products and is a voluntary initiative. 	62%
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change the Keyhole initiative to be mandatory and to include the information about the product's unhealthy nutritional information. 	
	The Norwegian School Fruit Scheme (2014)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The voluntary fruit and vegetable for children scheme allows parents to opt for their primary school aged child to receive free fruit and vegetables. 	40%
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend the scheme to automatically cover all children, including those in secondary school. 	
	Memorandum of Cooperation between MoH and food and soft drinks industry (2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This voluntary marketing of food and beverages initiative involves government requestion industry follow their guidelines. The guidelines cover broadcasting where over 50% of the audience is children aged under 13. 	33%
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply the policy to all broadcasting children under 18 years of age are exposed to, even if they make up under 50% of the viewing audience. 	
Physical Activity Policies			
	The open-air school (2014)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These holiday schools offer local children and youth (primarily 10–13 years old) local activities such as canoeing, climbing, fishing, nailing, playing, geocaching and swimming. 	63%
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This programme should be extended to include children up to 18 years of age. 	
	General physical activity guidelines for children, young, adults, elderly and pregnant (2014)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Norwegian Directorate of Health published national guidelines on sedentary behaviour, which highlight that everyone should reduce their sedentary behaviour. 	33%
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These guidelines should be expanded to include a dissemination plan. 	
	Learning in the open air (2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The national school programme offers school's whose outdoor council have opted-in support such as courses, activities and equipment, to make it easier to teach classes outside. The programme encourages both physical activity and student's relationship with nature. 	10%
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make every outdoor council automatically opt-in. 	
<i>For more information on childhood obesity in Norway, please click here.</i>			

Additionally, each score card provides a link to further information on childhood obesity, signposting to the World Obesity Federation's 2019 Extended Country Reports³. The country reports include graphics on the rates of overweight and obesity per country.

The brief also includes a resource section which links to a range of information on childhood obesity, healthy diets and physical activity; the WCRF NOURISHING policy database; and to the CO-CREATE⁴ Healthy Voices website.

Youth-Friendly Resource

This resource was designed to be youth-friendly through using imagery to convey messages, and using plain English language. The brief contains tables to break up the text and icons are included to represent the policy areas and provide a visual identity to each policy. The brief will be distributed online so it can be widely disseminated to range of audiences and promoted on social media. Hyperlinks are used throughout the document to ensure information is easily accessible.

Testing the benchmarks at a larger scale

Developing this brief gave WCRF the opportunity to test the benchmarking tool on a larger sample of policies, and look at how scores and policies interact with one another. Each individual policy area had a different set of benchmarks and indicators, which often had a different total score due to using a different number of tiers. Furthermore, as the brief only reviewed a sample of policies, it was hard to compile into individual country scores, as these would not reflect the nuances of the country's policy landscape. Furthermore, it was identified that some countries had multiple policies for a single policy area – such as marketing restrictions on unhealthy foods. Benchmarking a single policy related to marketing restrictions often did not give a representative impression of the marketing restrictions in place in a country (see limitations).

Using this brief

This brief will be disseminated in electronic form, with the target audience of youth and policy makers. Within the brief, there are country scorecards; it is envisaged that each scorecard will be translated into the language of that country to support policy development and youth co-creation activities.

Challenges

Developing this policy brief came with a number of challenges. As stated previously, the development of the brief relied on other WP2 outputs which are running concurrently, namely the Comprehensive European Scan and benchmarking the collected policies. Due to the time intensive nature of these outputs, and their reliance on one another, the sample size of policies was limited. However, WCRF International were able to reprioritise internal resources towards the policies in this brief, and earlier work outlining the policy areas to be analysed meant relevant policies could be quickly identified and benchmarked.

Additional challenges included delays in the policy scan and benchmarking process due to personnel sickness owing to COVID-19, and training new team members how to scan and benchmark.

Another challenge was ensuring that brief which would be relevant and accessible for youth co-creation activities, while also being relevant for government officials and policymakers. This was overcome by using simple but accessible language, infographics, and using tables to break up the text.

Limitations

This brief came with a number of limitations, which are outlined below.

Firstly, the findings were drawn from a small sample of policies which limited the comprehensiveness of the analysis and their results. Only a small sample of policies were analysed and certain policy

areas were prioritised in the policy scan process, to meet the needs of the brief. However, limitations due to the small sample size were offset by selecting similar policies throughout the countries to build comparability within the results.

Furthermore, using a small sample limited the findings and recommendations, as they were not reflective of the whole country's policy landscape. This limitation was in part due to the brief being written at the early stages of the comprehensive policy scan process, where only a small sample of policies were available. The second policy brief will have the all results of a comprehensive scan to analyse and will provide a more robust analysis of policies.

Another limitation is the benchmarking tool only allows a single policy to be scored, not a group of policies. This means that if policies built on one another, the scoring system would not be able to recognise how these policies interacted together; for example, a policy implemented in 1997 is improved by a new policy introduced in 2011, then another in 2019. The current scoring system scores each policy individually. Therefore, if an average score was applied across all the policies, it could inadvertently give a weaker overall score. Another limitation is the score is only meaningful when compared with another policy within the same policy area. For example, only the marketing policies should be compared with one another. Each policy area has a different value, which required the scores to be turned into percentages for comparability. Furthermore, the issue of applying individual benchmarking criteria to policies that crossed many different policy areas was also highlighted.

The policy brief has addressed this issue by only comparing policies within the same area, and reiterating that only a sample of a country's policies have been analysed. WCRF has decided against averaging the scores for a policy area, as this would not accurately represent the differences in policy strengths within and between policy areas. Using the tool for the purposes of this brief highlighted these issues and may result in the methodology to be updated to better reflect the interaction of policies.

An interim benchmarking coding schema was used for this briefing, but its use highlighted that the approach may need to be altered to better formulate an overall country score. Applying the benchmarking tool to many policies within one policy area highlighted challenges in developing an overall score, as did the issue of cross-dimensional policies (policies that cover many policy areas).

The brief was also limited as it only reflected policies at one point in time – hence being positioned as a 'snapshot'. The policy landscape is constantly changing, and these changes will not be reflected in the brief. The use of a small number of specific policies further compounds this effect. This means that the policy brief may have a shorter shelf life.

Lastly, whilst WPS were consulted on the development of the brief, youth were not directly involved in the final development (this was an issue confounded by the ongoing pandemic). However, other WPs who work with youth were consulted.

Many of these issues, such as the benchmarking coding schema, youth involvement, the breadth of the policy scan, and the small sample size, will be resolved before the second policy brief is developed for M60.

Conclusion

To conclude, the policy brief was developed to discuss the strength of implemented policies across the five European countries. Through this, it aims to support advocacy efforts to promote positive policy responses in the areas of healthy diets and physical activity for youth. This report discussed the background of this brief, the processes involved with its development and the brief's limitations. The development of the brief has been an invaluable tool for reviewing specific policies and the approach of the benchmarking tool. However, it showed that policies should not be viewed in isolation and reiterated the importance of taking a comprehensive approach during policy analysis. This brief was constrained by the progress of other CO-CREATE deliverables, however it still provides information and insight which can be used to advocate for the improvement of diet and physical activity policies.

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Appendix 1

The attached document *Addressing childhood obesity across Europe: a review of a sample of diet and physical activity policies from the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal and the United Kingdom*.



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April 2020



Addressing childhood obesity across Europe:

a review of a snapshot of diet and
physical activity policies from the
Netherlands, Norway, Poland,
Portugal and the United Kingdom

www.co-create.eu



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INTRODUCTION

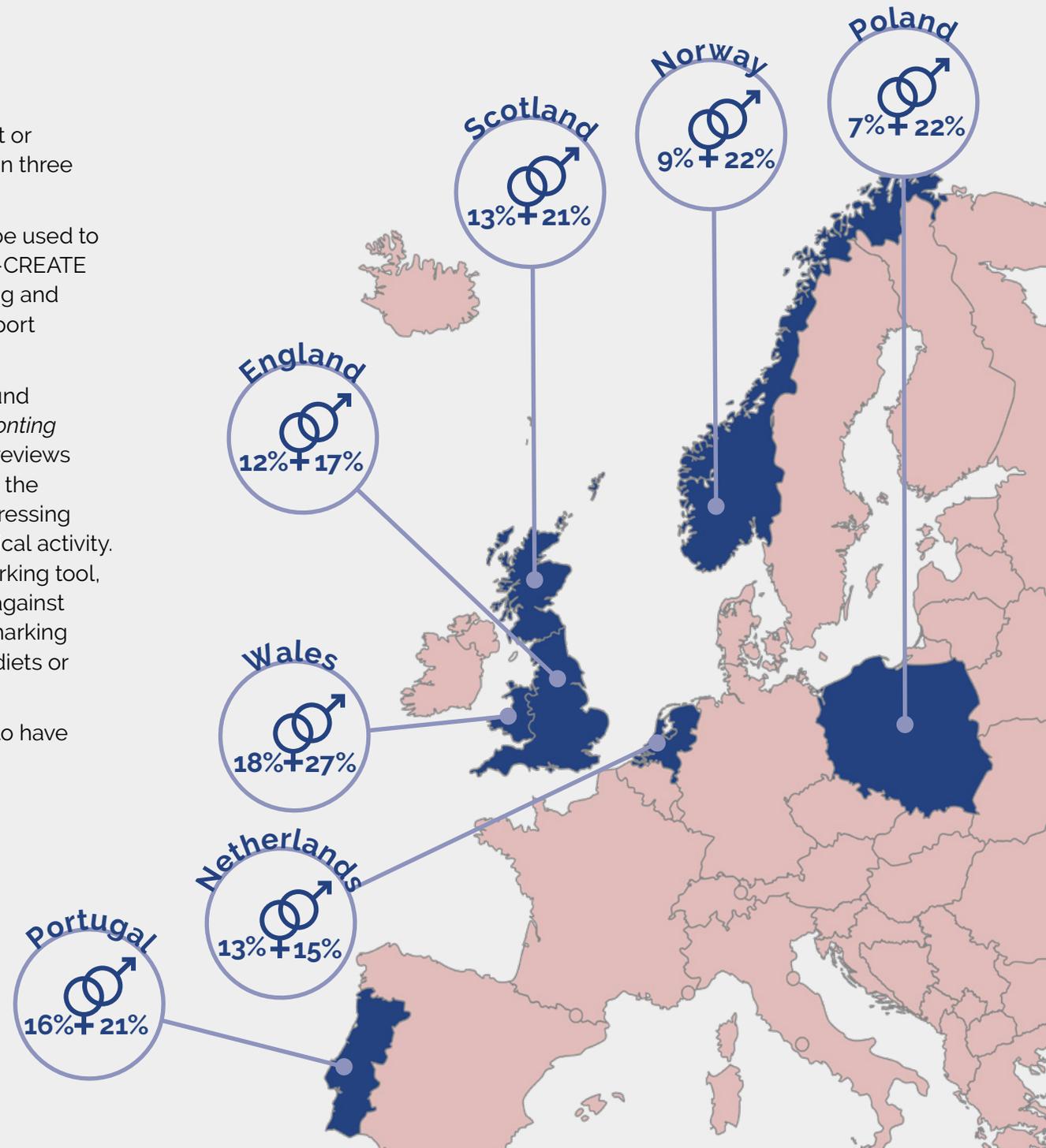
Over 338 million children¹ globally are affected by overweight or obesity, and according to data from WHO Europe (2014) one in three European 11-year-olds are overweight or obese.^{2,3}

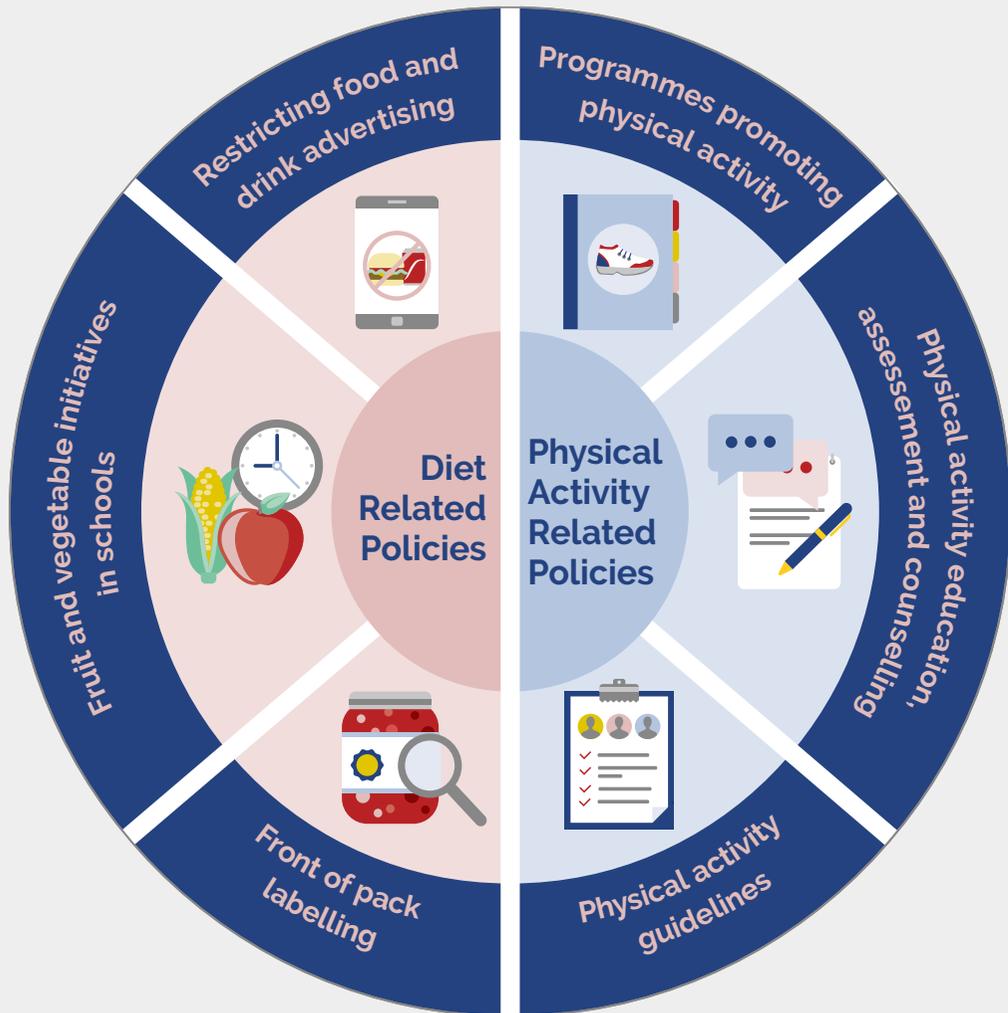
However, childhood obesity is preventable and policies can be used to promote healthy diets and increase physical activity. The CO-CREATE project works to address childhood obesity through educating and empowering adolescents to advocate for policies which support making the healthiest choice the preferred one.

This policy brief was produced by World Cancer Research Fund International, as part of the European Research project *Confronting Obesity: Co-creating policy with youth*³ – or 'CO-CREATE' and reviews a snapshot of policies to show how five European countries – the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Poland and the UK – are addressing childhood obesity through promoting healthy diets and physical activity. A selection of policies have been assessed using a benchmarking tool, which reviews the key attributes and strengths of the policy against a scoring criteria, to generate an overall % score. The benchmarking tool looks at how effective policies are at promoting healthy diets or increasing physical activity.

As shown through the map, all five of these countries report to have a significant proportion of overweight and obesity in children, particularly boys (HBSC, 2013/14 survey).

What is the percentage of 15-year-olds that are living with overweight or obesity?⁴





METHODS

1. The five focus countries in the CO-CREATE project for youth creation activities were used – the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal and the UK.
2. Three diet-related and three physical activity related policy areas per country were chosen from the NOURISHING⁵ and MOVING⁶ policy frameworks. These six areas were selected due to their focus on youth, alignment with WHO's *Tackling NCDs: Best Buys*⁶ and because each country had implemented policies within these areas for comparability. The selected six policy areas are shown in the diagram on the left.
3. A policy was selected from each of the six policy areas for each country from World Cancer Research Fund International's⁷ NOURISHING⁸ and MOVING policy databases.
4. A benchmarking tool reviewed the key attributes of each policy, assessed them against a scoring criteria and generated an individual score.
5. Country obesity data for youths aged 15 was identified from the Health Behaviours in School-Aged Children study.⁹
6. An analysis of the benchmarking results generated findings, which have been presented in country scorecards.

The policy snapshots have been analysed by country. These results have been compiled into the country scorecards below. These scorecards show each country's; childhood obesity information through its percentage of youth's aged 15 who are living with overweight or obesity; policy summaries; potential ways to improve the policy summarised; and a percentage score calculated by the benchmarking tool, showing the strength of the policy (0 is the weakest score possible, while 100 indicates the strongest possible policy); and links to further information.

⁶ The MOVING framework is World Cancer Research Fund International's latest policy database. Launching mid-2020, it will be a repository of national-level policies on Physical Activity.



Diet Related Policies			
	'Do I choose healthy?' app / 'Kies Ik Gezond?' app (2018)	<p>The Netherlands Government has developed a phone app which allows consumers to access nutritional information through scanning a product's barcode. However, the process required to readily access nutritional information relies on consumers having immediate access to technology and internet.</p> <p>Implement a Nutri-Score front of pack label in 2020.</p>	69%
	The EU School Fruit, Vegetables and Milk Scheme (2017)	<p>The Netherlands participates in the EU School Fruits Scheme, which provides primary and secondary schools with free fruit if requested. However, it is not compulsory for schools to participate.</p> <p>Ensure the EU School Fruits Scheme is mandatory for all schools.</p>	80%
	Dutch Self-Regulation Advertising Code for Food Products (2015)	<p>The Netherlands' food and drink marketing system is self-regulated, allowing food and drink, advertising, and broadcasting industry to write and regulate their codes without government input.</p> <p>Implement government-led and enforced food and drink marketing and broadcasting standards.</p>	33%
Physical Activity Policies			
	The Daily Mile (date unknown)	<p>This policy allows pupils and teachers to take a 15-minute break at least three times a week to run approximately a mile, to improve the pupils concentration and fitness.</p> <p>Make this programme mandatory for all schools.</p>	33%
	Physical activity guidelines (2017)	<p>The guidelines outline the minimum physical activity levels necessary for adults, older people and children from four to 18 years of age.</p> <p>The guidelines should be disseminated through mass communication campaigns and paired with interventions encouraging physical activity.</p>	33%
	B-Fit (2014)	<p>The B-Fit intervention aims to tackle the obesity and mobility in young people aged two-14 through education on how to acquire and maintaining an active and healthy lifestyle.</p> <p>The government should provide funding for this programme so schools can then be automatically enrolled without membership fees.</p>	27%

For more information on childhood obesity in the Netherlands, please click [here](#).

"Everyone should live healthier. We need more healthy restaurants; we need marketing of healthy products and sports." – Youth from the Netherlands



Diet Related Policies

	The Keyhole Logo (2009)	<p> The Keyhole Logo used in Norway has positive qualities such as its interpretive element. However, it only highlights the healthy aspects of the products and is a voluntary initiative.</p>	62%
		<p> Change the Keyhole initiative to be mandatory and to include the information about the product's unhealthy nutritional information.</p>	
	The Norwegian School Fruit Scheme (2014)	<p> The voluntary fruit and vegetable for children scheme allows parents to opt for their primary school aged child to receive free fruit and vegetables.</p>	40%
		<p> Extend the scheme to automatically cover all children, including those in secondary school.</p>	
	Memorandum of Cooperation between MoH and food and soft drinks industry (2013)	<p> This voluntary marketing of food and beverages initiative involves government requestion industry follow their guidelines. The guidelines cover broadcasting where over 50% of the audience is children aged under 13.</p>	33%
		<p> Apply the policy to all broadcasting children under 18 years of age are exposed to, even if they make up under 50% of the viewing audience.</p>	

Physical Activity Policies

	The open-air school (2014)	<p> These holiday schools offer local children and youth (primarily 10–13 years old) local activities such as canoeing, climbing, fishing, nailing, playing, geocaching and swimming.</p>	63%
		<p> This programme should be extended to include children up to 18 years of age.</p>	
	General physical activity guidelines for children, young, adults, elderly and pregnant (2014)	<p> The Norwegian Directorate of Health published national guidelines on sedentary behaviour, which highlight that everyone should reduce their sedentary behaviour.</p>	33%
		<p> These guidelines should be expanded to include a dissemination plan.</p>	
	Learning in the open air (2006)	<p> The national school programme offers school's whose outdoor council have opted-in support such as courses, activities and equipment, to make it easier to teach classes outside. The programme encourages both physical activity and student's relationship with nature.</p>	10%
		<p> Make every outdoor council automatically opt-in.</p>	

For more information on childhood obesity in Norway, please click [here](#).

Diet Related Policies

	<p>The Choices Logo (2008)</p>	<p> Whilst being a pioneering labelling scheme within the EU, the Choices Logo is voluntary, does not include numerical information and shows only positive nutrition qualities.</p> <p> Implement a compulsory front of pack label which includes numerical and unhealthy nutrition information.</p>	<p>54%</p>
	<p>The EU School Fruit, Vegetables and Milk Scheme (2017)</p>	<p> Poland has implemented the EU school fruits scheme, providing free fruit only to primary schools across Poland.</p> <p> Extend the scheme to cover secondary schools.</p>	<p>70%</p>
	<p>The Amended Act on Food and Nutrition Safety (2015)</p>	<p> Poland regulates which food and drink advertisements are allowed inside schools. However, this policy does not cover advertisements outside of school grounds which children are exposed to.</p> <p> Expand the policy to protect children from advertising outside school grounds.</p>	<p>70%</p>

Physical Activity Policies

	<p>Sports Club School Programme (SKS) (date unknown)</p>	<p> This programme aims to give extra time for physical activity for primary and secondary school students. This is done through physical activity run by a physical activity teacher in participating schools.</p> <p> Make the programme mandatory for all schools.</p>	<p>78%</p>
	<p>WHO – Global Recommendations on Physical Activity for Health (2010)</p>	<p> Poland has adopted the <i>WHO physical activity guidelines</i>⁴⁰ for all. The recommendations set out address three age groups, including 5–17 year olds.</p> <p> These guidelines should be disseminated through mass campaign and include signposting to services or more.</p>	<p>11%</p>
	<p>The National Talent Base (date unknown)</p>	<p> This is an online tool which can measure and assess children's physical health. It can be used by parents, trainers, teachers, research teams, employees of state administration and children themselves.</p> <p> Expand this tool to include advice and counselling for children with obesity-related issues.</p>	<p>67%</p>

For more information on childhood obesity in Poland, please click [here](#).



Diet Related Policies

	EU Regulation No. 1169/2011 on the Provision of Food Information to Consumers (2011)	<p> Portugal has adopted an EU food and beverage labelling policy, which allows industry to use any form of front of pack labelling on their products.</p> <p> Implement a standard government-led front of pack labelling system.</p>	62%
	The EU School Fruit, Vegetables and Milk Scheme (2017)	<p> Portugal uses the EU School Fruit Scheme, which provides free fruit to primary school children.</p> <p> Include secondary school students in the scheme.</p>	70%
	The Portuguese Pledge, modelled after the EU Pledge¹¹ (2010)	<p> Portugal's advertising to children pledge is applied to children aged 12 and under, and is written and enforced by the advertising industry.</p> <p> Make the code be written and regulated by the government and applied to all children under 18 years of age.</p>	70%

Physical Activity Policies

	Cycling goes to School (2018)	<p> This project aims to promote the use of bicycles in primary schools, including to students with special education needs.</p> <p> Extend the project to include secondary schools.</p>	50%
	Infographics about Physical Activity (date unknown)	<p> These are physical activity infographics, which include specific recommendations for infants (0–5), children (5–18 years old), adults, the elderly and pregnant women.</p> <p> Extend the guidelines to include their dissemination through campaigns and signposting to more information.</p>	11%
	School Sports Programme (2017–2021)	<p> This programme aims to give extra time for physical activity for primary and secondary school students. This is done through physical activity run by a physical activity teacher in participating schools.</p> <p> Make the programme mandatory for all schools.</p>	45%

For more information on childhood obesity in Portugal, please click [here](#).

“Cost of unhealthy food should be more cheaper and unhealthy food be more expensive” – Youth from the UK



Diet Related Policies

	The Front of Pack Nutrition Labelling Scheme (2013)	<p> The front of pack labelling policy includes positive and negative nutrient information but is not mandatory. Therefore, consumers cannot benefit from consistent health information across a range of products.</p> <p> Make the front of pack labelling system mandatory.</p>	69%
	The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme (2004)	<p> The UK has a fruit and vegetables in schools' programme, which provides the option of free fruit to publicly funded primary schools. Children in secondary schools are not included.</p> <p> Include all children under 18 years of age automatically in the scheme.</p>	70%
	Advertising ban in public transport network (2019)	<p> This policy does not allow unhealthy foods and beverages to be advertised on London's public transport network (TFL). Only unhealthy products with evidence they do not contribute to childhood obesity can be advertised.</p> <p> Extend this policy to prohibit advertising unhealthy products anywhere within London children may be exposed to.</p>	47%

Physical Activity Policies

	Bikeability (2010)	<p> Bikeability is the UK Government's cycle-training for school-children programme. It provides a range of cycling activities to schools and is available to every local body.</p> <p> Ensure all schools are automatically enrolled in the programme.</p>	50%
	UK Physical Activity Guidelines (2019)	<p> These guidelines follow a life-course approach and include guidelines for each specific age-groups (under-5's, 5-18's, adults, and adults 65+) and for certain people groups, such as pregnant women.</p> <p> The guidelines should include signposting to additional information, such as programmes which support the behaviour change.</p>	67%
	Royal College of General Physicians Physical Activity and Lifestyle Toolkit (2019)	<p> The Toolkit was designed for use by primary care professionals in the UK to promote physical activity to patients by providing a range of resources and advice. This includes advice for with obesity-related issue.</p> <p> Extend the toolkit to become guidelines or standards for all health-care professionals.</p>	60%

For more information on childhood obesity in the UK, please click [here](#).

SUMMARY

The sample of policies discussed throughout this brief show that each of the five countries have varying policies in place to address childhood obesity, with varying levels of strength. The simple analysis has highlighted where there are gaps and how each policy could be strengthened. Of the countries looked at, the UK was identified as having the strongest policies overall, albeit with significant room for improvement. Follow-up research is due to be carried out in order to analyse the selected policies within the context of the full range of policies available in each country, as available through the MOVING and NOURISHING policy databases.

The table below indicates the strength of policies that have been reviewed. Diet-related policies were reviewed to see how healthy diets were promoted. Physical activity policies were reviewed to see how physical activity can be increased.

Stronger policies have a higher percentage score and a darker colour.

Weaker policies have a lighter colour and a lower percentage score.



Table 1: An overview of policies and benchmarking scores.

Policy Area		NL	NO	PL	PT	UK
	Front of pack labelling	69%	62%	54%	62%	69%
	Fruit and vegetable initiatives in schools	80%	40%	70%	70%	80%
	Restricting food and drink advertising	33%	50%	70%	27%	47%
	Programmes promoting physical activity	33%	63%	78%	50%	50%
	Physical activity education, assessment and counselling	27%	33%	67%	45%	60%
	Physical activity guidelines	33%	10%	11%	11%	67%

LIMITATIONS

This briefing has presented the first comparison of policies implemented in European countries using the NOURISHING and MOVING frameworks. However, the research does have some limitations.

One limitation is that this brief's findings are drawn from a small snapshot of policies, analysed by a preliminary version of World Cancer Research Fund International's benchmarking tool. Also, the brief does not provide a comprehensive overview or analysis of all implemented policies within a country related to diet and physical activity and so the recommendations will be limited, not reflective of the whole policy landscape within a country and subject to modification over time as more policies are implemented. An additional limitation is that the benchmarking coding schema has been finalised for the purposes of this briefing, however may change going forward.

This brief was accurate at the time of writing, however updates to the broader policy landscape may not be reflected in this brief.

RESOURCES

For resources and tools to address the challenges of childhood obesity, follow the links below:

Tools and resources for youth: www.worldobesity.org/healthy-voices

Further information on childhood obesity: www.co-create.eu

An overview of childhood obesity rates across Europe:

www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/303438/HSBC-No.7-Growing-up-unequal-Full-Report.pdf

A database of implemented government policy actions to promote healthy eating, and to prevent obesity and non-communicable diseases:

www.wcrf.org/int/policy/nourishing-database

An overview of physical activity rates across the globe: www.globalphysicalactivityobservatory.com/country-cards

ABOUT CO-CREATE

Funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, CO-CREATE is led by the Norwegian Institute of Public Health and brings together 14 international research and advocacy organisations to work with young people to create, inform and promote policies for obesity prevention.

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ABOUT WCRF

This brief was produced by World Cancer Research Fund International as part of the CO-CREATE project. WCRF International is a leading authority on cancer prevention research related to diet, weight and physical activity.

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