

## Protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding in the WHO European Region

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# NUTRITION IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE SUCCESS OF ALL THE SDGs

Optimal nutrition is essential for achieving several of the Sustainable Development Goals, and many SDGs impact nutrition security. Nutrition is hence linked to goals and indicators beyond Goal 2 which addresses hunger. A multisectoral nutrition security approach is necessary for success.



# WHO recommendations

## WHO recommends:

- **Early initiation of breastfeeding**
- **Exclusive breastfeeding for first 6 months of life**
- Thereafter, **nutritionally adequate & safe complementary foods**, and **continued breastfeeding for up to 2 years or beyond**

## Global

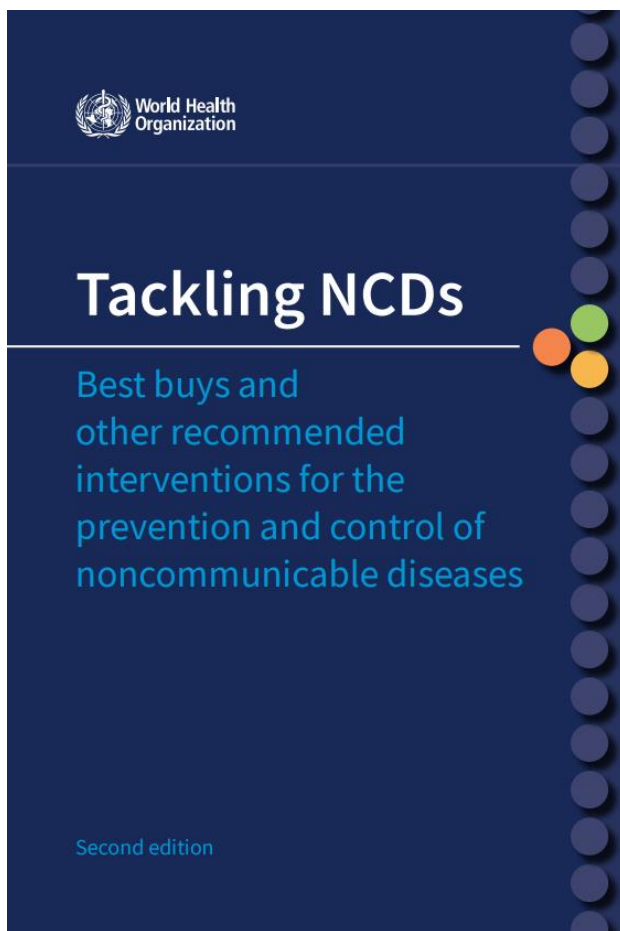


## A global public health recommendation and action:

- WHA resolution (1981 +) International code of marketing of breast-milk substitutes
- WHA resolution 54.2 (2001) – supports exclusive breastfeeding for first 6 months
- WHA resolution 55.22 (2002) – *Global Strategy on Infant and Young Child Feeding*
- WHA resolution 65.6 (2012) – *Comprehensive implementation plan on maternal, infant and young child nutrition* (target 5)
- WHA Resolution 71.9 (2018) – *Infant and Young Child Feeding*



# WHO recommends the implementation 'best-buys' measures for prevention and control of NCDs



## Reduce unhealthy diet

### Overarching/enabling actions

- Implement WHO's *Global strategy on diet, physical activity and health* (23), the *Global strategy for infant and young child feeding* jointly developed by WHO and UNICEF (24) and the *WHO Comprehensive implementation plan on maternal, infant and young child nutrition* (25).
- Develop and implement national nutrient- and food-based dietary guidelines, as well as nutrient profile models (26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31) for different applications as appropriate.

### Best buys and other recommended interventions



Best buys: Effective interventions with cost-effectiveness analysis  $\leq$  I\$100 per HLY gained in low-income and lower middle-income countries

Reformulation of policies for healthier food and beverage products (e.g. elimination of *trans*-fatty acids and/or reduction of saturated fats, free sugars and/or sodium)<sup>1,2</sup>

Front-of-pack labelling as part of comprehensive nutrition labelling policies for facilitating consumers' understanding and choice of food for healthy diets<sup>1,2</sup>

Public food procurement and service policies for healthy diets (e.g. to reduce the intake of free sugars, sodium and unhealthy fats, and to increase the consumption of legumes, wholegrains, fruits and vegetables)<sup>1,2</sup>

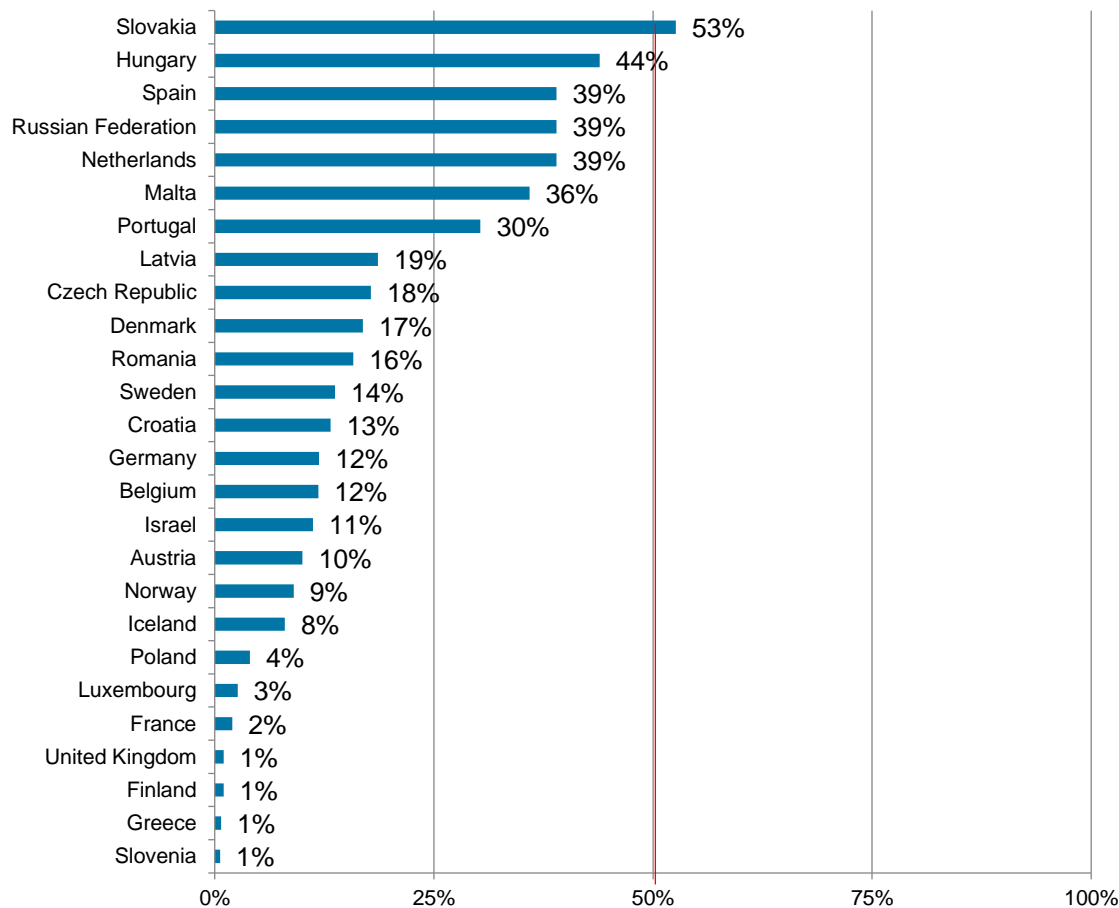
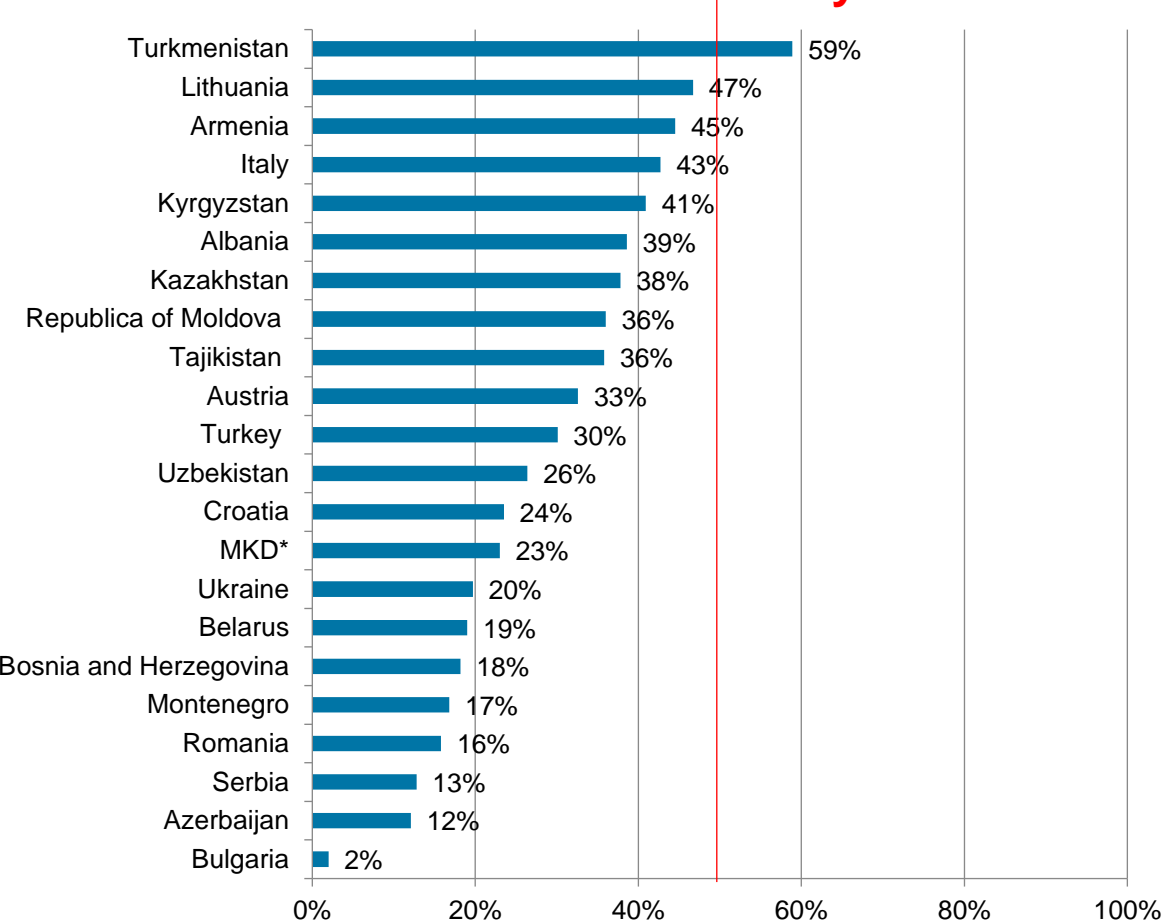
Behaviour change communication and mass media campaign for healthy diets (e.g. to reduce the intake of energy, free sugars, sodium and unhealthy fats, and to increase the consumption of legumes, wholegrains, fruits and vegetables)<sup>1,2</sup>

Policies to protect children from the harmful impact of food marketing<sup>1,2</sup>

Protection, promotion and support of optimal **breastfeeding** practices<sup>1,2</sup>

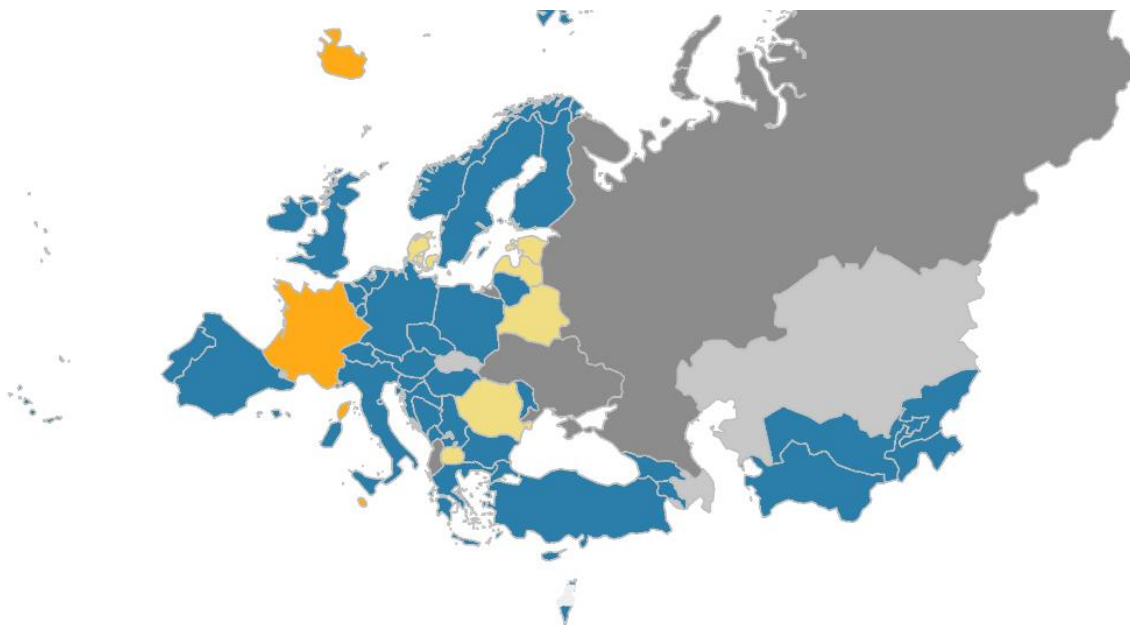
# Exclusive Breastfeeding UNDER and AT SIX MONTHS

**Global Nutrition Targets for 2025, is to increase the rate of exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months of life to at least 50% worldwide by 2025.**





# Implementation status of baby friendly hospital initiative (BFHI), 2017



■ Currently implemented    ■ Previously implemented, but not currently    ■ Never implemented  
■ No response    ■ Did not participate in survey



# Seventy-first World Health Assembly on Infant and Young Child Feeding

Urges Member States to:

**Increase investment & support of breastfeeding**

**Reinvigorate the Baby-friendly Hospital Initiative**

**Strengthen national implementation of the  
International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk  
Substitutes**

**Promote timely & adequate complementary  
feeding**





# The TEN STEPS to Successful Breastfeeding



STEP	Original version (1989) 'Every facility providing maternity services and care for newborn infants should':	Revised version (2018)
1	Have a written breastfeeding policy that is routinely communicated to all healthcare staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Comply fully with the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk substitutes and relevant World Health Assembly resolutions.</li> <li>(b) Have a written infant feeding policy that is routinely communicated to staff and parents.</li> <li>(c) Establish ongoing monitoring and data-management systems.</li> </ul>
2	Train all healthcare staff in the skills necessary to implement the breastfeeding policy.	Ensure that staff have sufficient knowledge, competence and skills to support breastfeeding
3	Inform all pregnant women about the benefits and management of breastfeeding.	Discuss the importance and management of breastfeeding with pregnant women and their families
4	Help mothers to initiate breastfeeding within half an hour of birth.	Facilitate immediate and uninterrupted skin-to-skin contact and support mothers to initiate breastfeeding as soon as possible after birth.
5	Show mothers how to breastfeed and how to maintain lactation even if they are separated from their infants	Support mothers to initiate and maintain breastfeeding and manage common difficulties.
6	Give newborn infants no food or drink other than breastmilk, unless medically indicated.	Do not provide breastfed newborn infants any food or fluids other than breastmilk, unless medically indicated
7	Practice rooming-in, allowing mothers and infants to remain together 24 hours a day.	Enable mothers and infants to remain together and to practice rooming-in 24 hours a day.
8	Encourage breastfeeding on demand	Support mothers to recognize and respond to their infant's cues for feeding.
9	Give no artificial teats or pacifiers (also called dummies or soothers) to breastfeeding infants.	Counsel mothers on the use and risks of feeding bottles, teats and pacifiers.
10	Foster the establishment of breastfeeding support groups and refer mothers to them on discharge from the hospital or clinic.	Coordinate discharge so that parents and their infants have timely access to ongoing support and care.

Figure 1

World Health Organization/United Nations Children's Fund Ten Steps To Successful Breastfeeding (original version: 1989 and revised version: 2018)



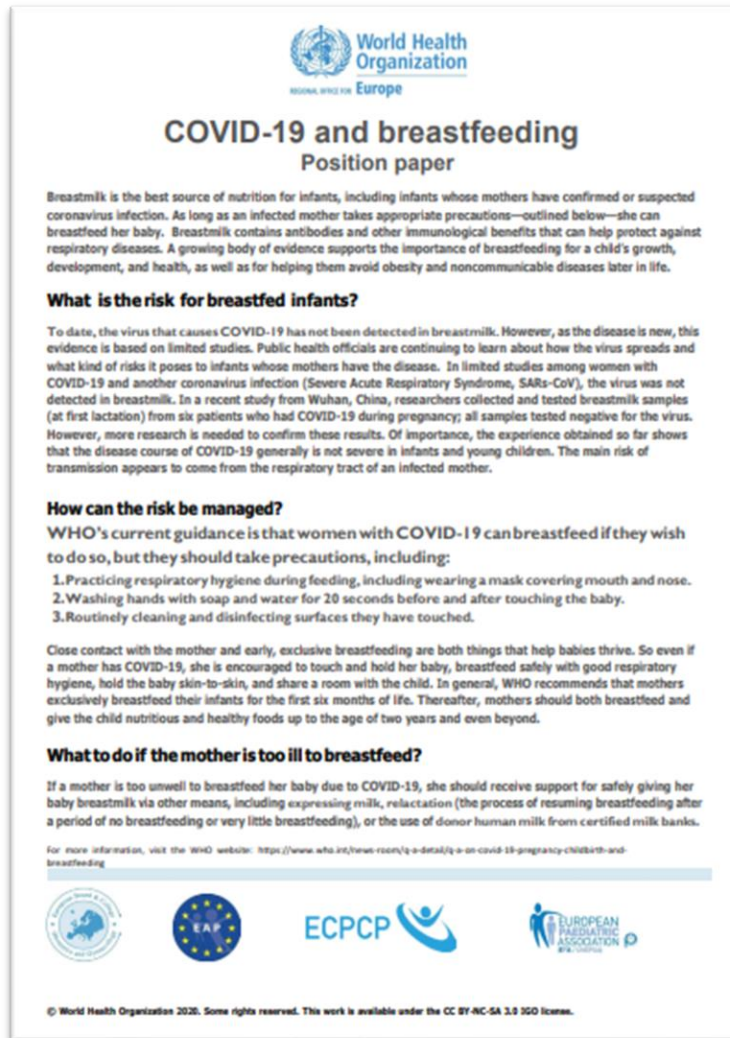
# The best start in life: breastfeeding for the prevention of NCDs and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in the WHO European Region

November 2018





# Country support in breastfeeding promotion



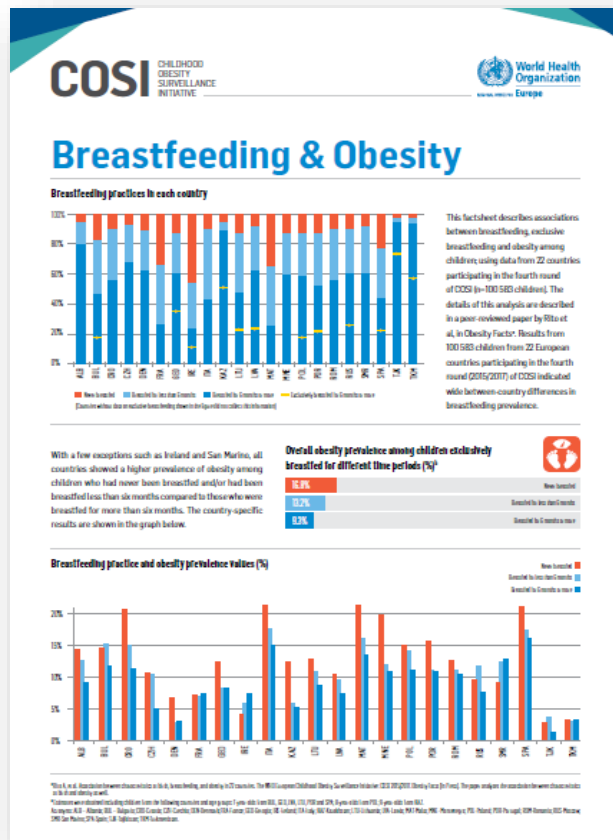
Breastfeeding Working Group:  
Summer and Winter Seminar Series  
(2020-2022) (*Due to reestablished in 2024*)

Convening health experts, government officials, maternity staff, researchers and other stakeholders to share experiences from across the Region.

Providing technical support to Member States on an as-needed basis (training, policy guidance, research and surveillance)

Assessing the landscape of digital marketing of breastmilk substitutes

# Promote and support exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life



**22 countries** in Europe (COSI Round 4): **100 583** children






# Summit of the Spouses of European Leaders to launch the Network on the Prevention of Childhood Obesity in the WHO European Region, 9–10 May 2023, Zagreb, Croatia



# Zagreb Declaration



- Formally adopted during Summit
- Intended to serve as strong foundation for future actions of the Network
- Includes an Annex with selected policy recommendations
- Slovenia developed its own list of policy recommendations, adapted to national context
- Links
  - [English version](#)
  - [Russian version](#)




**SUMMIT OF THE SPOUSES OF EUROPEAN LEADERS**  
to launch the Network on the  
**PREVENTION OF CHILDHOOD OBESITY**  
in the WHO European Region

**ZAGREB DECLARATION**

9-10 MAY 2023  
THE WESTIN ZAGREB HOTEL



**World Health Organization**  
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR Europe

## ANNEX 1<sup>1</sup>

Selected policy recommendations to reduce childhood obesity

Diet	Physical activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Restrict sales, marketing (including online marketing) and portion sizes of unhealthy foods</li><li>• Provide subsidies to increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables</li><li>• Display front-of-pack nutrition labelling on all foods to increase consumers' access to nutritional information and inform healthy choices</li><li>• Develop a single system to improve the impact of the front-of-pack labelling system</li><li>• Run mass-media campaigns on healthy diets, including social media campaigns (promote healthy lifestyle and create demand for healthier behaviours)</li><li>• Regulate where and how food outlets can operate</li><li>• Implement healthy public food procurement and service policies; require that all foods and beverages served or sold in public settings (such as schools) contribute to promoting healthy diets</li><li>• Control the clustering of unhealthy food outlets around secondary schools to support efforts within schools</li><li>• Implement measures to encourage reformulation (for example reduction of salt, fat and sugar in processed foods)</li><li>• Reduce sugar consumption through effective taxation on sugar-sweetened beverages</li><li>• Broaden taxes to incorporate unhealthy food products including those high in fats, sugar and salt</li><li>• Impose restrictions on multi-buys and other price promotions on unhealthy foods</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide convenient and safe access to quality public open spaces</li><li>• Encourage active travel by providing safe footpaths and local cycle lanes, and creating walking buses for children attending local educational facilities</li><li>• Ensure that urban and rural design incorporates residential density, connected street networks that include sidewalks, easy access to a diversity of destinations and access to public transport</li><li>• Run mass-media campaigns, community-based education and motivational and environmental programmes on physical activity</li><li>• Provide physical activity counselling and referral as part of routine primary health-care services through brief interventions</li></ul>
	<h3>Breastfeeding promotion</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Campaigns to communicate the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life, alongside complementary feeding up to two years and beyond</li><li>• Implement the WHO and UNICEF* Baby-friendly Hospital Initiative to enable mothers to breastfeed infants, along with lactation support training for health professionals</li><li>• Provide universal paid maternity leave, national labour policies and workplace support for breastfeeding, along with laws to protect breastfeeding in public</li><li>• Restrict the inappropriate marketing of products that compete with breast-milk, as detailed in the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes</li><li>• Encourage healthy introduction to solid food through reformulation of infant food to improve its nutritional profile, along with accurate labelling of these products</li></ul>

\* United Nations Children's Fund

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from: WHO European Regional Obesity Report 2022. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2022 (<https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/352747>, accessed 10 November 2022). This is not a legally binding document. This Annex provides a selection of recommendations that have been previously published in WHO reports and resolutions.



# WHO European Regional Obesity Report 2022



This report will be a **driving force** for the next decade, as we accelerate our efforts to halt the rise in obesity in the WHO European Region.

**WHO EUROPEAN  
REGIONAL OBESITY  
REPORT 2022**





World Health  
Organization

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EUROPE



for every child

Strengthening Code Measures,  
Monitoring and Enforcement Systems  
to Protect Breastfeeding in Europe and Central Asia,  
Tashkent, 13-17 May 2024



## **Commercial foods for infants and young children in the WHO European Region**

A study of the availability, composition and marketing of baby foods in four European countries



## **Ending inappropriate promotion of commercially available complementary foods for infants and young children between 6 and 36 months in Europe**



A discussion paper outlining  
the first steps in developing a nutrient profile  
model to drive changes to product composition  
and labelling and promotion practices in the  
WHO European Region



# NEW SURVEY: indicators for assessing infant and young child feeding practices

## "Surveillance and Harmonization of Breastfeeding Indicators in the WHO European Region"

- mapping exercise to create a comprehensive picture of breastfeeding indicator measurement and data source availability in WHO European countries.

The survey covers the following breastfeeding practices:

- Ever breastfed (**section 1**)
  - Early initiation of breastfeeding (**section 2**)
  - Exclusive breastfeeding for the first two days after birth (**section 3**)
  - Exclusive breastfeeding under six months (**section 4**)
  - Continued breastfeeding at 12-23 months (**section 5**)
  - Other practices, such as mixed milk feeding under six months (**section 6**)





## WHO Acceleration Plan to Stop Obesity – Breastfeeding Workshop from 1-3 December 2024 in Cairo, Egypt.



# Thank you

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