



A WHO nutrient profile model: the European perspective

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**Всемирная организация
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Overview

- Brief recap of context and mandate for WHO's work on nutrient profiling
- Previous work by WHO in this area
- Specific objectives of developing a WHO Nutrient Profile Model
- About the model
- Next steps

- NP is “the **science of classifying or ranking foods** according to their nutritional composition for reasons related to preventing disease and promoting health”.
- Nutrient profiling is a **tool to categorise foods, not diets**, but can be used via policy to improve the overall nutritional quality of diets
- It has been **recognized by WHO as a useful tool** for a variety of applications
- The WHO **Set of Recommendations on Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages to Children** highlights **nutrient profiling as one approach** to categorising foods

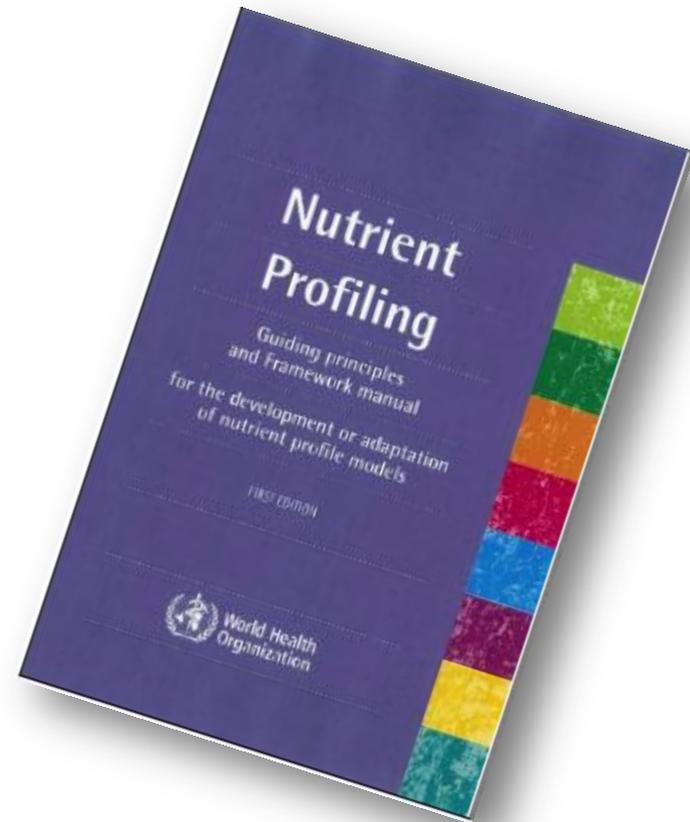


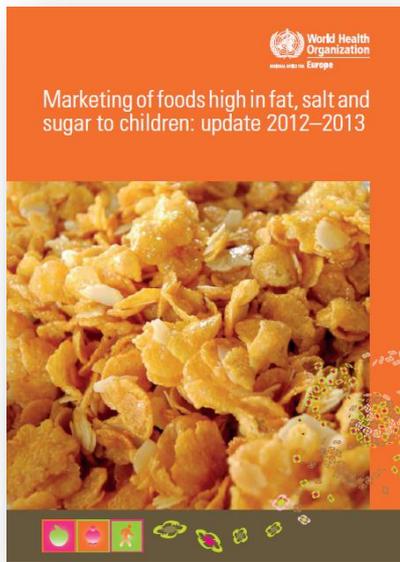
- The Vienna Declaration on Nutrition and NCDs includes a **commitment to take decisive action** to reduce food marketing pressure to children
- Member States also **called for common tools**, such as nutrient profile models
- In the European Food and Nutrition Action Plan 2015-2020 Member States committed to work with WHO **to develop and adopt regional approaches** to nutrient profiling for the purposes of restricting the marketing to children



Previous work by WHO in this area

- WHO has been **working with Member States** in the development of nutrient profile models since 2009
- **A guiding principles and framework manual** (*in press*) has been developed and field-tested in six different countries, in addition to a catalogue of existing models
- The **European Network on Reducing Marketing Pressure on Children**, led by the Norwegian Directorate for Health and facilitated by the WHO Regional Office for Europe, has conducted some work related to nutrient profiling





Previous work by WHO

Status of policies on food marketing

	No action reported	Partially or fully implemented	Comprehensive policy
Countries (N)	20	33	0

- A 2013 report by the WHO Europe found that, despite progress, **few countries have fully implemented restrictions** on the marketing of foods to children
- **No countries have taken a fully comprehensive approach**
- Many countries report difficulty in overcoming the challenge of classifying foods - may result from the lack of a nutrient profile model
- Only **Denmark, Ireland, Norway** and the **UK** have used a nutrient profile model in connection with marketing restrictions.

Objectives of developing a regional model

- Respond to **requests for technical support** from countries
- To **draw on lessons learned by those countries that have already developed nutrient profile** models for the purpose of restricting the marketing of foods to children
- Design a **model that is easy for countries to incorporate** into policy at the national level (allowing for minor adaptation if necessary)
- Provide a **common solution to a common challenge**, with regional and global impact

Process of developing the model

- Three European models were discussed at an expert meeting: UK, Norwegian and Danish models
 - These are the only three models that are currently in use in Europe for restricting marketing to children and have either been developed by government or endorsed by government (in the case of the Danish model).
- Each of the models was considered relatively strict and categorized foods similarly (i.e. most of the same foods would/would not be permitted)
- Ultimately it was decided to base the European nutrient profile model on the Norwegian and Danish models
 - Category-specific models are easier to adapt or modify than models based on scoring, which is an important consideration for a regional model that countries will be looking to use nationally.

Process of developing the model

- Countries were actively involved in the development of the European model
 - Face-to-face meetings with countries
 - Pilot testing in 15 countries looking at frequently-marketed and commonly-consumed food products
 - Feedback and modification
- Anticipated publication in early 2015

About the model

FOOD CATEGORY	INCLUDED IN CATEGORY	NOT INCLUDED IN CATEGORY	CUSTOMS TARIFF CODE*	MARKETING PROHIBITED IF EXCEEDS PER 100 G						
				TOTAL FAT (g)	TOTAL SUGARS (g)	ADDED SUGARS (g)	ADDED ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS ^a	ENERGY (KCAL)	SATURATED FAT (g)	SALT(g)

- **Model consists of 19 food categories (incl. sub-categories)**
 - Majority taken from Norwegian model, some from Danish (where not included in Norwegian), and some additional categories following consultation with countries
 - Descriptions of the food products included/not included within the food categories were taken from both models and supplemented with further examples
 - Guidance for food companies also provided by customs tariff codes

About the model

Food Product Categories

1. Chocolate and sugar confectionary, energy bars, sweet toppings and desserts
2. Savory snacks
3. Beverages
 - i. Juices
 - ii. Milk drinks
 - iii. Other beverages
4. Edible ices
5. Breakfast cereals
6. Cakes, sweet biscuits and pastries, other sweet baker's wares and other such dry mixes
7. Yoghurts, sour milk, cream and other similar foods
8. Ready made, convenience foods and composite dishes
9. Cheese
10. Butter and other fats oils
11. Bread, bread products and crisp breads
12. Fresh or dried pasta, unprocessed rice and grains
13. Fresh and frozen meat, poultry, fish and similar
14. Processed meat, poultry, fish and similar
15. Fresh and frozen fruit and vegetables
16. Processed fruit and vegetables
17. Sauces and dressings

About the model

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- The nutrients covered by the model are total fat, saturated fat, total sugars, added sugars, and salt; products containing trans-fat are prohibited
- Energy (kcal) is a criterion for ready meals, convenience foods and composite dishes; added sweeteners is a criterion for some beverages
- Thresholds taken from Norwegian model, unless the Danish model was stricter
- Where missing from both, salt thresholds were taken from the Finnish Decree on Food Package Markings
- Some thresholds made stricter following feedback from countries

How does the model work?

- **Identify which food category the products falls under.**
 - In some case this will be very clear according to the food category name (e.g. breakfast cereals; yoghurts). In other cases, it may be necessary to refer to the “included in category” or “not included in category” columns, and/or check the customs tariff code number.
- **The nutritional content of the food product must then be cross-checked against the thresholds.**
 - A food product must not exceed (on a per 100g/ml basis) any of the relevant thresholds for that category. For example, in the case of breakfast cereals, a product must not exceed the criteria for total fat, total sugars or salt.
- **The food products should, where possible, be assessed as sold or as reconstituted (if necessary) according to the manufacturer’s instructions.**
- **If the marketing is for a restaurant meal, including a quick-service or take-away meal of two or more menu items, then all items should meet the nutrient criteria.**

Feedback from countries

- Overwhelmingly positive
- Categories considered to be appropriate and easy to use
- Thresholds appropriately strict, with only minor modifications recommended
- Consistent with food-based dietary guidelines and WHO recommendations
- Results of pilot-testing demonstrate some variation in the marketing environment across countries:
 - Nutritional quality of products frequently marketed significantly worse in some countries

Next steps

- The model will be finalised in the next few weeks and published in early 2015
- Continued collaboration with colleagues in headquarters and other WHO regional offices to build on our experience
- Continued support to countries across the region to develop policies to restrict food marketing to children, with the nutrient profile model as a key tool to underpin policy development