

Summary of the main interventions to reduce salt consumption in European countries

Consumer education campaigns	
Information campaigns and other interventions aimed at increasing consumer awareness in relation to salt consumption, organized mainly by government bodies together with other intervention strategies.	Almost all European countries.
Mandatory limits on salt content in consumer foods	
Introduction of maximum salt levels in bread; in some countries maximum levels have also been introduced in other types of food such as milk derivatives, tomato-based products or meat-based products.	Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Netherlands, Portugal.
Taxation on food products high in salt	
Taxes on a wide range of processed foods high in sodium, such as salty snacks, sauces and condiments, in case of exceeding specific thresholds of sodium content.	Hungary.
Voluntary food reformulation	
Collaboration agreements and / or awareness-raising interventions directed to food industry and catering have promoted voluntary reformulation of many categories of processed foods, offering consumers products with a lower salt content, generally not exceeding predefined specific thresholds. Mainly affected foods: bread, meat, ready meals, salty snacks, cheeses and soups.	Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom.
Interventions in public institution settings	
Mandatory nutrition standards limiting sodium content or voluntary guidelines promoting a healthy diet low in sodium have been adopted primarily in schools and hospitals, and in some countries also in workplace settings.	Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom.
Voluntary front of pack labelling	
Simplified labels generally based on symbols or logos aimed at guiding consumers towards products of high nutritional quality with a low content of sodium, sugars and fats. The most common are the traffic light logos that associate different colors to the global nutritional value (Nutri-Score) or to the content of individual ingredients (British label) per 100 grams of product. Scandinavian countries use the keyhole logo highlighting only the healthiest products.	Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom.
Mandatory front of pack labelling	
Some countries have mandatory front of pack labelling for different categories of food showing if the product is low or high in sodium.	Finland, Ireland, Portugal.
Monitoring sodium content in processed foods	
Data on sodium content in processed foods are collected through food composition databases, analysis of food products, information provided by the food industry.	Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom.
Monitoring population sodium intake	
The measurement of population sodium consumption is carried out through eating habits surveys and/or measurement of urinary sodium excretion. More and more countries are using 24 hours urinary sodium excretion which is the best method to assess sodium consumption at population level (gold standard method).	Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom.
Monitoring consumer knowledge, attitude and behaviour	
Surveys are mainly focused on the knowledge of high salt intake effects on health, and the attitude and behaviors related to salt, such as salt added to cooking and at the table.	Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, United Kingdom.

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References:

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