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## Foreword

**Non-communicable diseases (NCDs)**, also known as chronic diseases, are diseases that are not transmissible from one person to another, such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancers and chronic respiratory diseases. NCDs are the result of **unhealthy lifestyles**, e.g. tobacco use, physical inactivity, unhealthy diets and use of alcohol, leading to metabolic and physiological changes. In European countries, NCDs are responsible for

although running rampant, the complex health issues caused by NCDs can be tackled, if we improve prevention measures and promote health.

Healthy diets are a key aspect of our lifestyle, and can help tackling the rise of NCDs. A balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats is essential for our overall health, and reduces the risk of chronic illnesses.

The **Preventia project aims to decrease the spreading of NCDs across the EU**, while reducing health inequalities and fostering cooperation and exchanges between the EU Member States.



*Stay tuned for news about the consortium and developments from the project*

### **Activities to be launched in 2025 by SAFE, LCI, EEKE, CEIP, Promote Ukraine, U.DI.CON, ADOC**

Since the project launch in January 2024, we have laid strong foundations by partnering with **schools, migration centres, and healthcare institutions** to host our activities. We created tailored **training materials for schools** in disadvantaged areas, launched a **twinning programme for medical centres** to support peer learning, and designed a **culinary initiative** involving migrants and displaced people from Ukraine.

In 2025, we kicked off school trainings in Greece, **Croatia**, and Italy, and we held our first **culinary workshop with migrants in Athens**.

And there's more. We have launched **BiteWatch**, an innovative mobile app designed to help consumers make healthier and better-informed food choices when purchasing food products.



- . **iOS users:** Install [TestFlight](#) and download [BiteWatch](#).
- . **Android users:** Get it from [Google Play](#) or use the [testing link](#).
- . **Feedback form:** Share your thoughts [here](#).

In addition, we carried out an **assessment of NCD policies** in partner countries to inform an upcoming policy brief and public health guidelines.

Looking ahead, we'll run **awareness campaigns** to boost health literacy and **organise workshops for NGOs and Ukrainian health professionals**, with a focus on health promotion and diabetes prevention.



*Uncover the most relevant news about non-communicable diseases, nutrition and health*

**Plant-based diet diversity linked to better heart and metabolic health, UK study finds**, *Nutrition insight*, 7 August 2025

Researchers at the UK's Department of Nutrition suggest that eating a more diverse range of plant-based foods leads to better cardiometabolic health results, mitigating the risk of cardiovascular diseases and type 2 diabetes.

**Neglecting obesity in the 2025 NCD agenda will leave one billion people behind**, *thebmj*, 7 August 2025

The obesity epidemic is one of the most pressing challenges of the 21st century. Yet the draft political declaration of the 2025 UN General Assembly high level meeting on the prevention and control of NCDs falls short in confronting the obesity crisis.

**Healthy diets may slow down heart and brain disease in older adults**, *Nutrition insight*, 5 August 2025

Older people who follow a healthy diet have a slower development of chronic diseases,

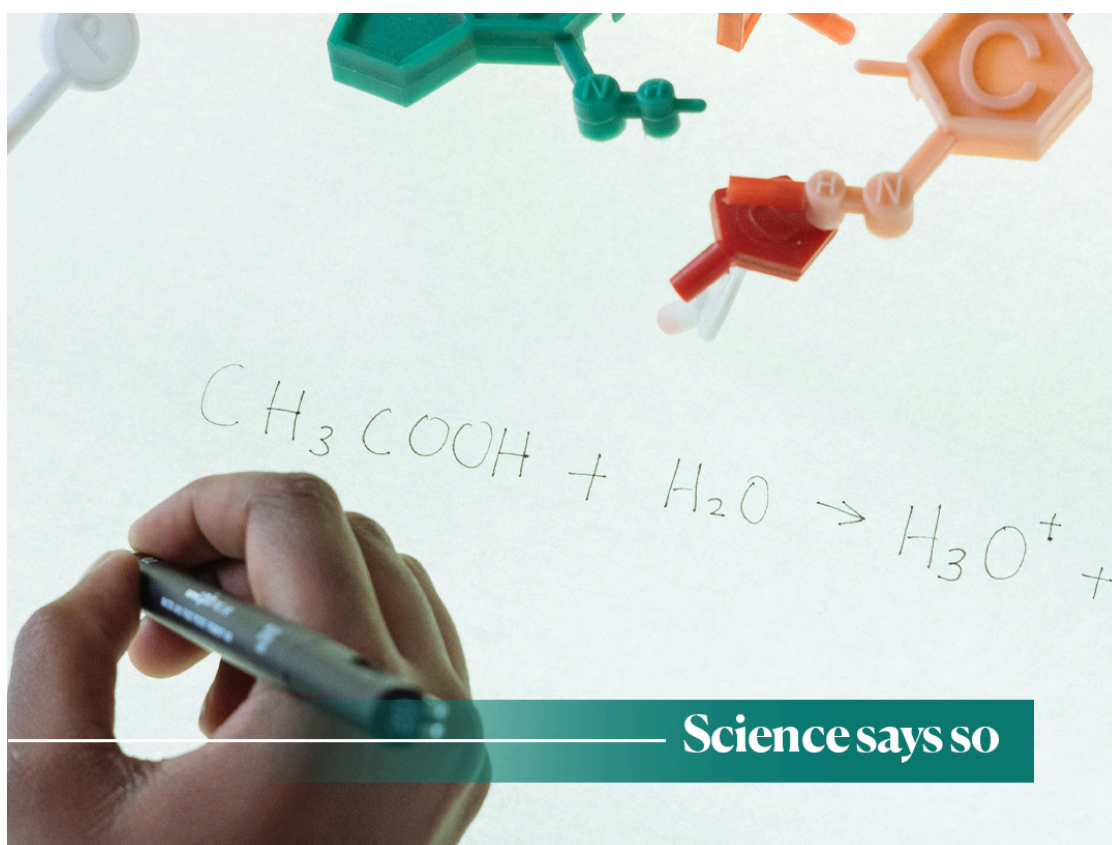
intake of sweets, red and processed meat, and butter or margarine.

**The Impact of Diet on Gut Health and Cancer Development**, *Technology networks*, 30 July 2025

Mounting evidence suggests that what we eat not only shapes the composition of our gut microbiota but also plays a critical role in cancer susceptibility, particularly in colorectal cancer (CRC).

**Eat better, sleep better: Study reveals “same-day” impact of diet on sleep quality**, *Nutrition insight*, 16 June 2025

A new study suggests that one of the most effective solutions to improve sleep quality may already be in the kitchen: fruits and vegetables. Researchers from the University of Chicago Medicine (UChicago), US, and Columbia University, New York, US, reveal that eating more fruits and vegetables during the day is linked to better sleep quality that same night.



**Science says so**

***Uncover the most relevant scientific studies about non-communicable diseases, nutrition and health***

**Active but still gaining weight? Duke scientists reveal why**, Lakin, M., *Duke University*, 21 July 2025

While many experts have offered that rising obesity rates are due to declining physical activity as societies become more industrialised, the findings show that people in wealthier countries expend just as much -- or even more -- energy daily. In an article recently published in PNAS, Duke researchers point instead to higher caloric intake as the primary driver, suggesting that diet rather than idleness plays the bigger role in the global obesity crisis.

**Bridging the implementation gap in non-communicable diseases**, Mikkelsen, B., Ursu, P., Chaumont, C., et al., *Nature medicine*, 18 June 2025



(SDGs), which calls for a reduction in premature mortality from non-communicable diseases (NCDs) by one third by 2030 relative to a 2015 baseline. To the contrary, NCDs account for three quarters of the global mortality burden, and they considerably affect the quality of life of those living with them.

**Vitamin D: recent advances, associated factors, and its role in combating non-communicable diseases**, Deepika, Kumari, A., Singh, S., et al., *Nature npj science of food*, 13 June 2025

Trace elements of this vitamin in the body play a significant role in the regulation of body metabolism. This immunomodulatory vitamin plays a role in management of both communicable (viz. respiratory illness like COVID-19 and Respiratory tract infections) and non-communicable diseases e.g., cancer, osteomalacia, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases. Deficient levels, i.e., vitamin D deficiency in body can lead to the onset of chronic non-communicable illnesses.



## EU Regulatory Updates

*Find out the latest positions, progresses and regulatory developments on health, nutrition and NCDs prevention*

**EU Cardiovascular Health Plan: Call for Evidence**, European Commission, 11 August 2025

The European Commission is inviting input on the EU's future Cardiovascular Health Plan, through a Call for Evidence open until the 15th of September. The call is open to citizens, patient organisations, NGOs, healthcare providers and professionals, research and technology organisations, academia, and other interested parties that wish to give their views. The Call for Evidence is a chance for contributors to express their views and share insights on the problems to be solved, the key action areas proposed and the likely impact.

The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) has issued an opinion highlighting growing healthcare access inequalities across the EU. Vulnerable groups are especially affected due to inflation and the cost-of-living crisis. The EESC urges swift action and policy reforms to ensure fair access to healthcare, aligned with the European Pillar of Social Rights.

**Healthy food revolution to tackle obesity epidemic**, *Gov.UK*, 29 June 2025

Food retailers and manufacturers will ‘make the healthy choice the easy choice’ in a world-first partnership between government and industry to tackle the obesity epidemic and ease pressure on the health system. Businesses will be required to make the average shopping basket of goods sold slightly healthier, and will be given the freedom to meet the standard in whichever way works best for them, whether that’s reformulating products, changing shop layouts, offering discounts on healthy foods, or changing loyalty schemes to promote healthier options.

**Improving reach and access to health promotion and preventive services for vulnerable children and adolescents: Experiences from five European**, European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, 1 April 2025

Childhood and adolescence are vital for shaping long-term health, yet many countries underinvest in early prevention and health promotion. Vulnerable children, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, face significant barriers to accessing care, including cost, complexity, and poor coordination between services. Improving outcomes requires targeted interventions, cross-sector collaboration, better data sharing, and tailored outreach to ensure inclusive and effective support.



## Upcoming Events in the EU

### *Upcoming events on NCDs, prevention, and healthy nutrition*

**Launch of the EuroHealthNet-CHAIN report on social inequalities in health, hosted by the European Parliament Interest Group on Health Inequalities, Prevention and**



Brussels, Belgium

**Fourth High-level Meeting of the UN General Assembly on the prevention and control of NCDs and the promotion of mental health and wellbeing (HLM4)**, organised by the World Health Organization, 25 September 2025, New York, USA

**European Public Health Conference 2025**, organised by EuroHealthNet, 12-14 November 2025, Helsinki, Finland

**NCDs, obesity and liver health – Can the EU turn the tide?**, organised by Euractiv, 4 December 2025, Hybrid, online and Brussels, Belgium



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