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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 an enormous part of the burden that public health systems in the Member States are facing. The increasing rates of deaths related to NCDs in Europe are concerning, but although running rampant, the complex health issues caused by NCDs can be tackled, if

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

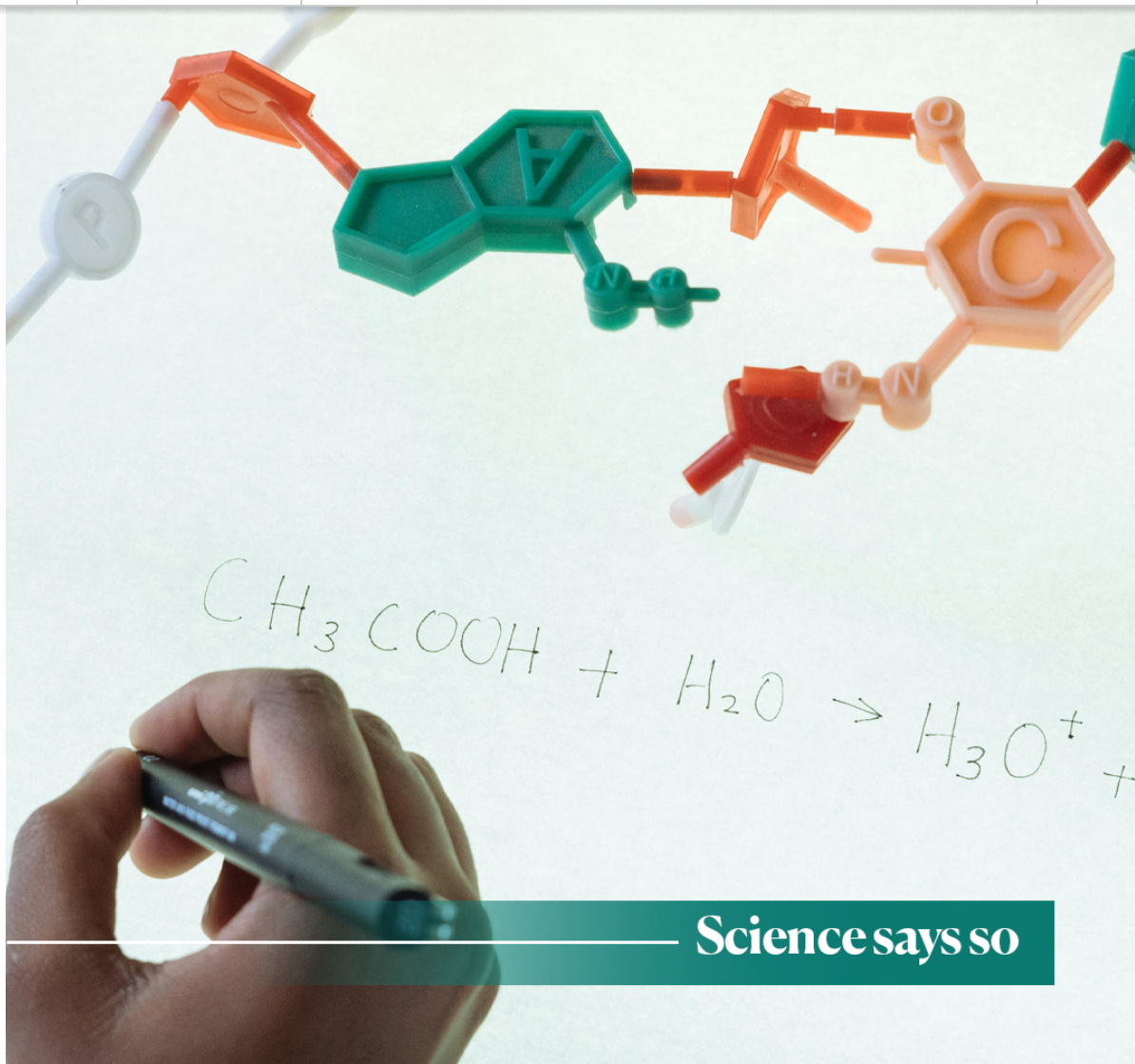
that will be implemented this year.

In 2025, we will enhance health literacy by organising **training in schools** located in socio-economically disadvantaged areas, while a **twinning programme** will be carried out to promote peer-learning among doctors from different EU Member States.

In addition, **workshops with NGOs** active in the field of NCDs and **Ukrainian healthcare professionals** will be organised, while an **initiative for migrants** will be carried out across migration centres in Europe with the aim of tackling health inequalities.

Lastly, we will launch **BiteWatch**, a smartphone app aimed at helping consumers make more informed and healthier choices when purchasing food products.

All our activities aim at raising awareness about the importance of **healthy diets as a key tool to prevent non-communicable diseases**. Stay tuned for more updates on our upcoming project activities!



Science says so

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

Lobbying, transparency and trust: power imbalances and the failure to implement Europe's Beating Cancer Plan. Garde, A., Gokani, N., et al., *The Lancet*, 19 February, 2025

Despite the EU's focus on preventing non-communicable diseases (NCDs), their prevalence continues to rise, causing significant health and economic burdens. The European Commission's commitments under the Prevention Pillar of Europe's Beating Cancer Plan have stalled, with no new legislation on food and alcohol labelling published. This stagnation highlights issues with transparency and the ineffectiveness of self-regulation, emphasizing the need for legally binding measures to address commercial determinants of health.

Mediterranean Diet and Quality of Life in Adults: A Systematic Review. Godos, J., Guglielmetti, M., et al., *Nutrients*, 5 February, 2025

population and those with chronic conditions. A systematic review of 28 studies found a strong association between this diet and better HRQoL outcomes. The Mediterranean diet not only helps prevent and manage chronic diseases but also enhances overall health and quality of life in aging individuals.

Overweight and obesity among adolescents: health-conscious behaviours, acceptance, and the health behaviours of their parents, Lewandowska, A., Rudzki, G., et al., *BMC Public Health*, 2 February, 2025

Obesity has become a global epidemic, affecting both high- and low-income countries, particularly in urban areas. The main cause is an imbalance between calorie intake and expenditure, leading to rising rates among children and adolescents. This study aimed to analyse the factors contributing to obesity in young people and the impact of parental health behaviours on their children's health.

Burden of micronutrient deficiency among patients with type 2 diabetes: systematic review and meta-analysis, Mangal, D. K., Shaikh, N., et al., *BMJ Nutrition Prevention & Health*, 29 January, 2025

Micronutrient deficiencies are a significant issue worldwide, particularly in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. These deficiencies can impact glucose metabolism and insulin signalling pathways, potentially leading to the beginning and advancement of type 2 diabetes (T2D). This study is a comprehensive assessment of the burden of multiple micronutrient deficiencies among T2D patients. The aim of the study is to resolve conflicting evidence from previous studies that mainly focused on one specific micronutrient.

New study reveals how a 'non-industrialized' style diet can reduce risk of chronic disease, *University College Cork*, 23 January, 2025

New study reveals how a 'non-industrialized' style diet can reduce risk of chronic disease. Researchers have developed the NiMe™ (Non-industrialized Microbiome Restore) diet, inspired by traditional, non-industrialized eating habits, which has been shown to significantly reduce the risk of chronic diseases. In a three-week human trial, participants experienced weight loss, a 17% decrease in bad cholesterol, a 6% reduction in blood sugar, and a 14% decrease in C-reactive protein levels, all linked to beneficial changes in the gut microbiome.

Evaluation of the relationship between nutrition literacy, Mediterranean diet compliance, ecological footprint and sustainable environmental attitudes in adolescents, Mengi Çelik, Ö., Ekici, E. M., et al., *BMC Public Health*, 13 January, 2025

The study found that girls have higher nutritional literacy and sustainable environmental attitudes compared to boys. There is a significant positive correlation between nutrition literacy, sustainable environmental attitudes, and adherence to the Mediterranean diet. Additionally, nutritional literacy influences sustainable environmental attitudes and diet compliance, while sustainable environmental attitudes help reduce the ecological footprint.

Burdens of type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease attributable to sugar-sweetened beverages in 184 countries, Lara-Castor, L., O'Hearn, M., et al., *Nature*

A study estimated the global burden of type 2 diabetes (T2D) and cardiovascular diseases (CVD) attributable to sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs) across 184 countries in 1990 and 2020. In 2020, SSBs were linked to 2.2 million new T2D cases and 1.2 million new CVD cases worldwide, with higher burdens among men, younger adults, higher-educated adults, and urban residents. The highest SSB-attributable burdens were in Latin America, the Caribbean, and sub-Saharan Africa, highlighting the need for effective policies to reduce these health impacts.

Gut microbiome signatures of vegan, vegetarian and omnivore diets and associated health outcomes across 21,561 individuals, Fackelmann, G., Manghi, P., et al., *Nature microbiology*, 6 January, 2025

A study of 21,561 people from five multinational cohorts found that different diets (omnivore, vegetarian, vegan) affect gut microbiomes. Red meat influenced omnivore microbiomes negatively, while vegan-associated microbes were linked to better health markers. Understanding these diet-specific gut microbes can help with future nutritional interventions.



Latest News on Nutrition and Health

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

Gut microbes may mediate sugar-sweetened beverage impact on diabetes risk, *Nutrition Insight*, 4 February, 2025

Scientists have expanded their understanding of the gut microbiome's role in digestion and health. New research found that high consumption of sugary beverages alters gut microbiota and blood metabolites, increasing diabetes risk. This study focused on US Hispanic and Latino adults, linking these changes to a higher diabetes risk over the next ten years.

Body-gut bacteria partnerships may unlock cholesterol control and fatty liver treatments, *Nutrition Insight*, 28 January, 2025

New research suggests potential solutions to fatty liver disease and high cholesterol by revealing the workings of body-gut bacteria partnerships. According to the study, the partnerships balance complex chemicals regulating bile acids for digestion, cholesterol control, and fat metabolism.

A University of Cambridge study found that a high-fiber diet promotes beneficial gut bacteria, reducing harmful pathogens like *E. coli* and *Klebsiella*. Researchers identified 135 gut microbe species that protect against infection and used AI to analyze stool samples from 12,238 people across 45 countries. They suggest that increasing fiber intake can support good bacteria growth and lower the risk of illness.

Experts Propose New Criteria for Diagnosing Obesity, *Health Policy Watch*, 15 January, 2025

The Commission on Clinical Obesity recommends that diagnosing obesity should go beyond BMI to include waist circumference and physical symptoms. They propose a nuanced definition of "clinical obesity" as a disease and introduce "pre-clinical obesity," which carries health risks but no ongoing illness.

What we eat affects our health—and can alter how our genes function, *Medical X Press*, 9 January, 2025

A Stanford Medicine study found that fiber digestion produces short-chain fatty acids that directly affect gene expression, with some changes having anti-cancer effects. These findings highlight the importance of fiber-rich foods like beans, nuts, and vegetables in potentially preventing cancer.

Mediterranean diet linked to improved memory via gut bacteria changes, *Medical X Press*, 5 January, 2025

A study published in *Gut Microbes Reports* by Tulane University researchers found that a Mediterranean diet leads to different gut bacteria patterns compared to a typical Western diet, correlating with better memory and cognitive performance. Lead author Rebecca Solch-Ottaiano, Ph.D., noted that dietary choices can influence cognitive function by reshaping the gut microbiome. The study also showed that rats on a Mediterranean diet had beneficial changes in gut bacteria and improved performance on memory and learning tests.



EU Regulatory Updates

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

Vision for Agriculture and Food, European Commission, 19 February, 2025

The Commission is presenting the Vision for agriculture and food, fostering trust and dialogue across the entire value chain within the EU and globally. The document highlights the importance of diverse and balanced nutrition for well-being and health, emphasising the need to monitor the effects of food advertising, particularly on vulnerable groups such as children.

Welcoming Commissioner Olivér Várhelyi, European Commission, 16 January, 2025

The New Year begins with the new Commissioner for Health and Animal Safety in office. In this first edition for 2025, Commissioner Olivér Várhelyi outlines his priorities for the next five years.

The European Commission and UNICEF announce a new partnership to improve health outcomes for children, European Commission & UNICEF, 8 January, 2025

This initiative aims to address service delivery gaps for vulnerable groups and combat issues like stagnating vaccination rates, rising mental health conditions, obesity, and increased vaping and alcohol consumption among children in 29 European countries.



Upcoming Events in the EU

Upcoming events on NCDs, prevention, and healthy nutrition

EP Policy Event: Health Equity for Marginalised Voices: EU's Path Forward, 5 March, 2025, Brussels, Belgium

Nutrition For Growth Paris 2025, 27-28 March, 2025, Paris, France

European Congress on Obesity Weight Management, 10-11 April, 2025, Barcelona, Spain

32nd European Congress on Obesity, 11-14 May, 2025, Malaga, Spain

Digital Health World Congress 2025, 29-30 May, 2025, London, United Kingdom

[Italy](#)

[European Health Management Conference 2025 | Taking action to improve health for all](#), 4-6 June, 2025, Rennes, France

[Europe's #1 healthcare innovation event](#), 16-19 June, 2025, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

[23rd International Congress of Nutrition of IUNS](#), 24-29 August, 2025, Paris, France



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