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Ministero della Salute



Conference on "Nutrition and Physical Activity from childhood to old age: challenges and opportunities"

The EU Action Plan on Childhood Obesity 2014-2020

Daniela Galeone

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Obesity: the epidemic of the 21st century

Overweight and obesity contribute to a large proportion of NCDs in Europe :

- ☐ shortening life expectancy
- ☐ adversely affecting the quality of life

More than one million deaths/year (in WHO European Region) due to excessive body weight related diseases *

*Source



Obesity: the epidemic of the 21st century

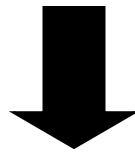
- **PRIMARILY AFFECTED:** *socially disadvantaged categories* (lower income, poorer education, lower healthcare access)

Obesity reflects and accompanies inequalities, favouring the onset of a “vicious circle”

Overweight /Obesity in children

- **Important effects on children's health**
- **Predictive factor for obesity in adult age**

Overweight children have more probability to be obese when adults



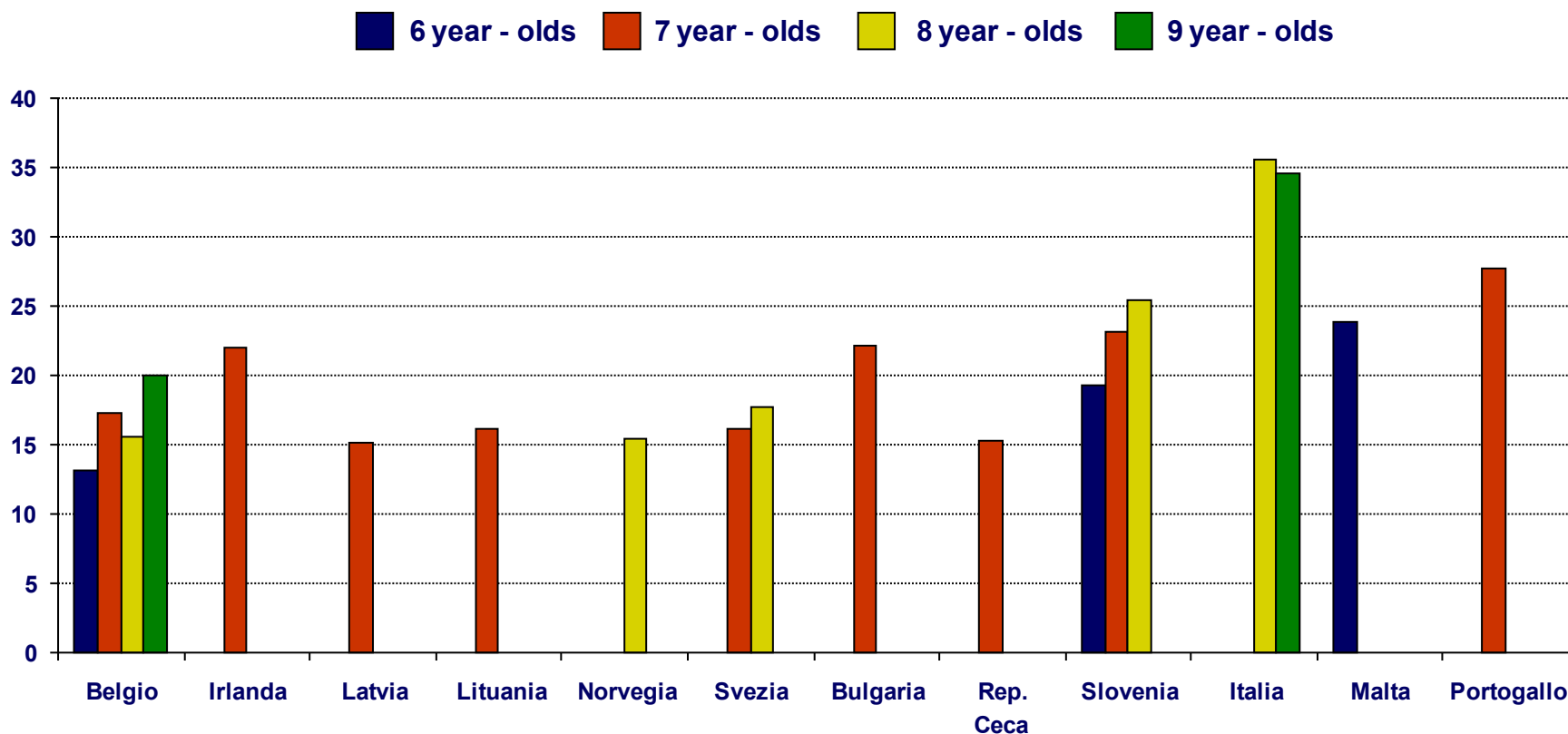
Reduction in the age of NCDs onset

Increased burden on Health Services

Overweight + Obesity in children

(cut-offs IOTF)

Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative: WHO/EU 2008



Source: Wijnhoven T, Van Raaij JMA, Spinelli A, *et al.* WHO European **Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative** 2008: weight, height and body mass index in 6-9-year-old children. *Pediatric Obesity* 2012 (doi: 10.1111/j.2047-6310.2012.00090.x).

The global alarm: which solutions?

Global problems need global solutions

- **Pay attention to risk factors and health determinants**
- **Strengthen a multisectoral strategy** (involving different sectors: environment, education, agriculture, transports, etc.)
- **Tackle health inequalities**
- **Promote people “empowerment” towards healthy choices**
- **Encourage producers responsibility**
- **Ensure a systemic approach in healthcare**
- **Implement surveillance and monitoring systems**
- **Develop research on innovation**
- **Improve international cooperation**

An effective answer: The EU Action Plan on Prevention of Childhood Obesity

Objective

Contribute to stop the rise in overweight and obesity in children and young people (0-18 years) by 2020

Key areas of action

- Support a healthy start in life
- Promote healthier environments, especially in schools
- Make the healthy option the easier option
- Restrict marketing and advertising to children
- Inform and empower families
- Encourage children to be more physically active
- Monitor and evaluate
- Increase research

Obesity: current situation in Italy

Alarming levels of obesity and overweight

Adults (19-65 years old):

31% Obese - 10% Overweight



Children (8-9 years old):

10.6% Obese - 22.2% Overweight

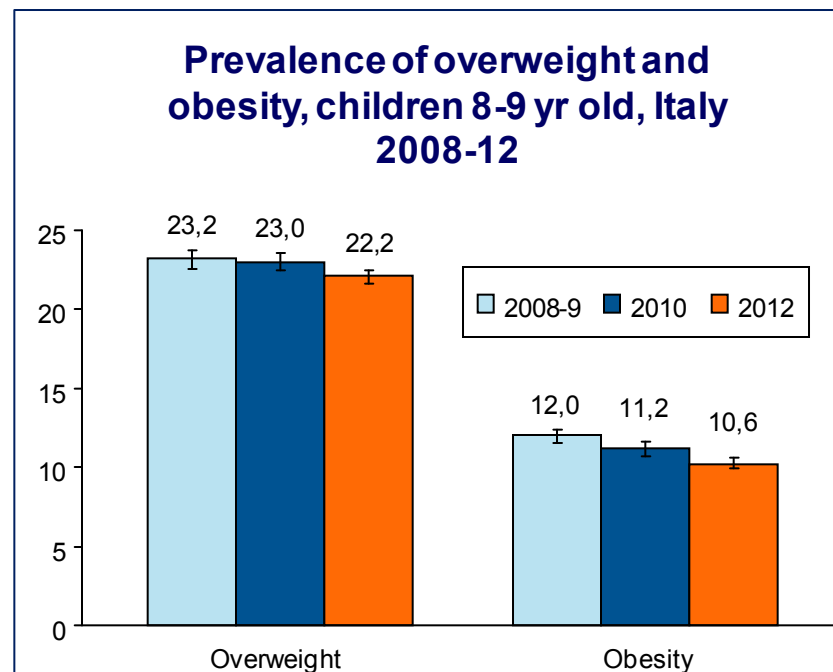
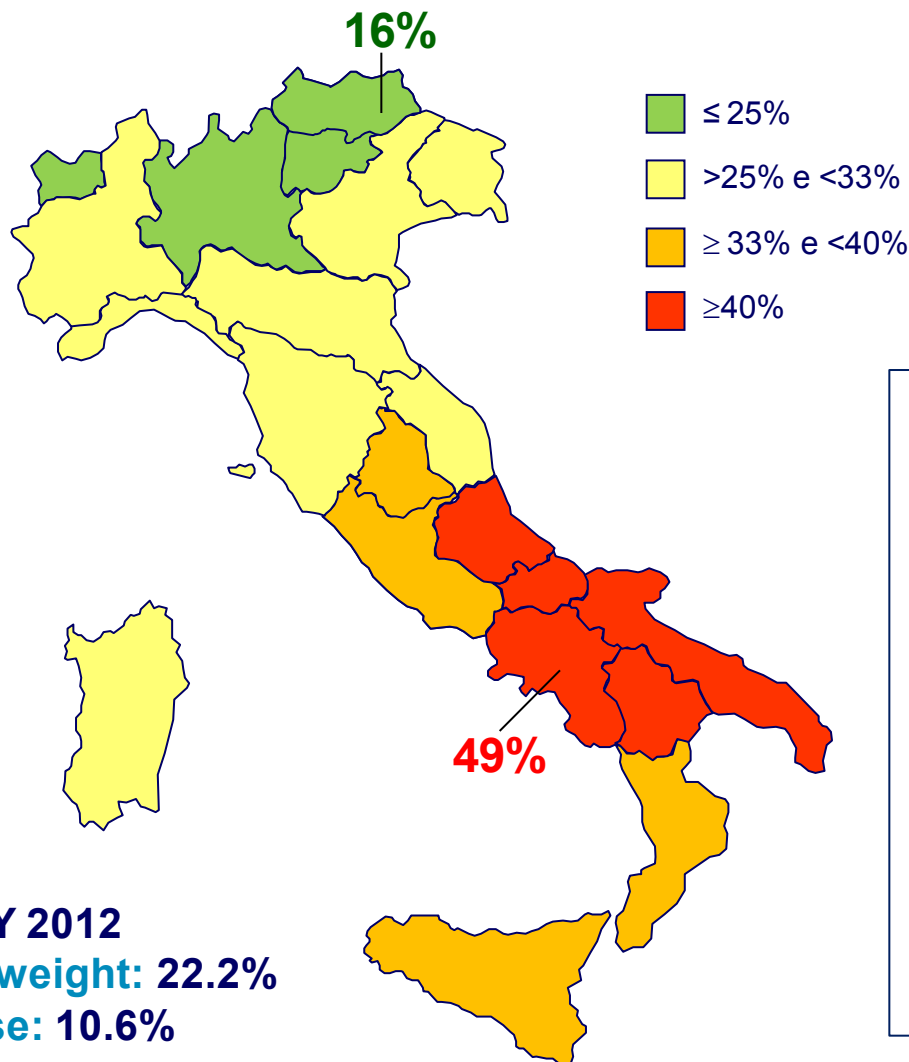


Higher percentage in Southern Regions and in the islands

Source: Surveillance Systems *PASSI 2010* and "*Keep an Eye on Health*" 2012

Source: Surveillance *PASSI 2009*



Overweight+obesity by region, children 8-9 years old. Italy 2012





The number of children estimated to be overweight at the national level is 740.000 and obese 355.000
 Prevalence calculated using as a reference the IOTF

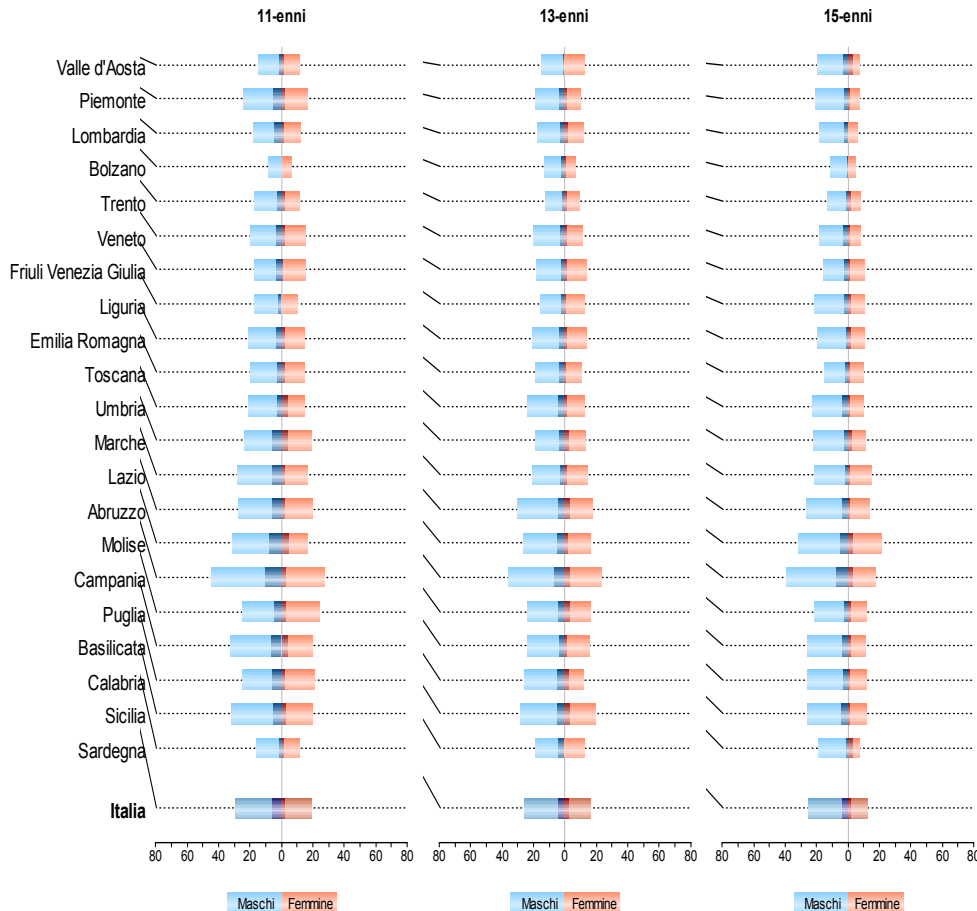
Overweight +Obesity (adolescents 11-15 y.o.)

Sovrappeso **Obesi**

Maschi  

Femmine  

HBSC 2010
(Health Behaviour in School-aged Children)

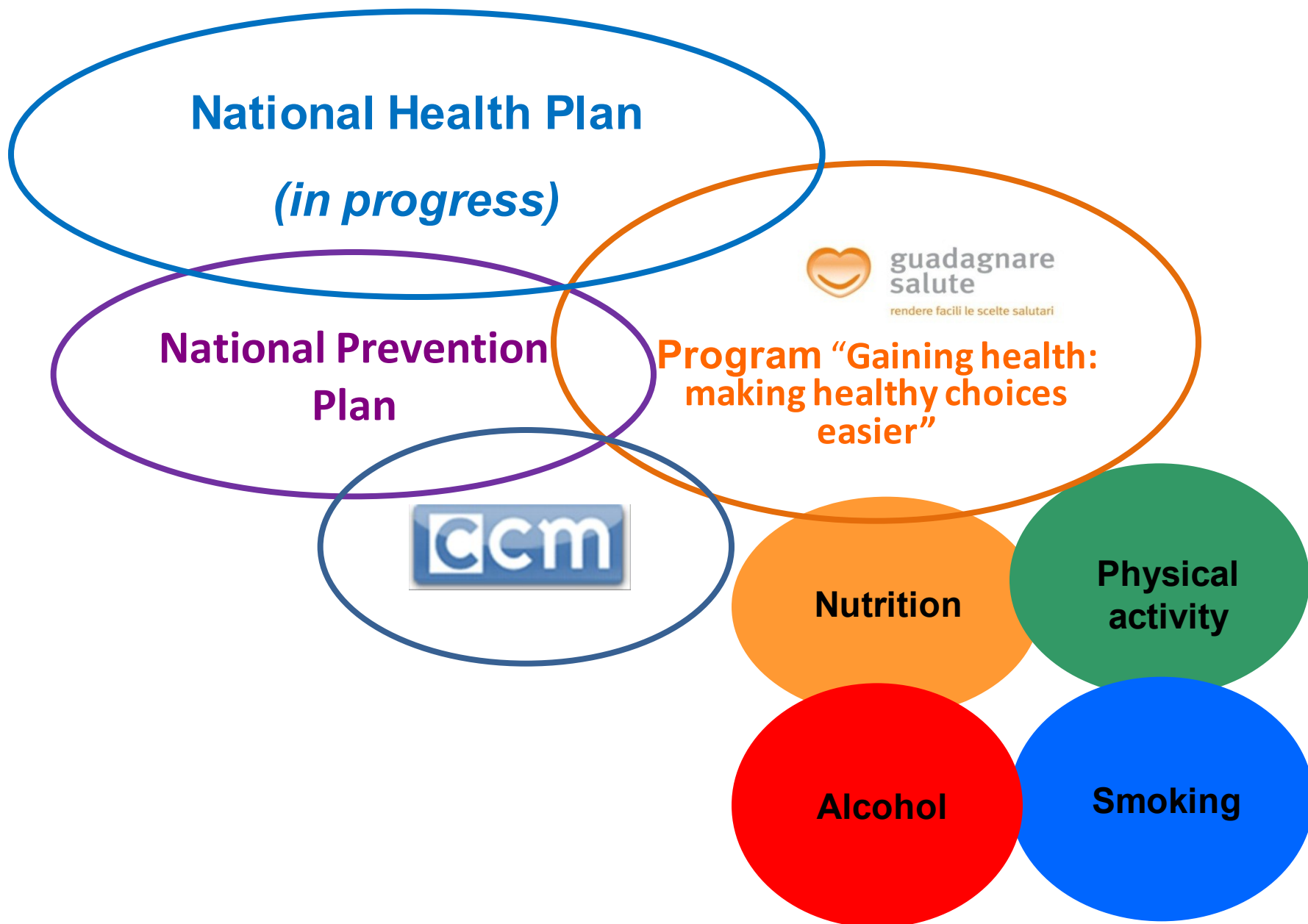


- **More than 20% of Italian adolescents is *overweight or obese***
- **High frequency of unhealthy habits:**
 - No breakfast
 - Low consumption of fruit and vegetables
 - High consumption of sweetened beverages

The Italian strategy

- Strengthen obesity prevention by applying the *“Health in all policies”* approach
- Cooperate with **European Union** and **WHO** in the fight against obesity and chronic diseases

The Italian strategy



The Program “Gaining health: making healthy choices easier”

A national Government strategy based on the “*Health in all policies*” approach :

- ❖ promoting **cross-sectoral** actions
- ❖ facilitating **behaviors** with positive impact on people’s health
- ❖ preventing NCDs by tackling main common risk factors (tobacco use, harmful use of alcohol, unhealthy diet and lack of physical activity)

The National Prevention Plan

A National plan to develop at Regional level the intersectoral approach of “Gaining Health”:

- ❖ implementing actions in specific health areas
- ❖ promoting the **involvement of other sectors**

The italian strategy

PRIORITIES 1

□ Policies:

- Implement a “Whole of Government” approach to address the social determinants of health and develop intersectoral actions (HiAP)
- Improve the health sector’s ability to work with other sectors, exploring policy innovation, promoting institutional arrangements across Government departments and across other sectors of society
- Tackle health inequities

Gaining health: making healthy choices easy”

The “National platform on food, physical activity and tobacco use”

- consisting of representatives from different Institutions
- involving also other stakeholders from civil society

Key structure for achieving the goals and implementing interventions in areas other than the health sector

The italian strategy

PRIORITIES 2

☐ Health promotion and prevention:

- develop a “life course” approach
- facilitate healthy choices in life for all citizens
- establish health promotion communication
- promote people/communities «empowerment»
- promote “good practices “ or “evidence-based” interventions
- integrate health into education programmes
- implement monitoring tools and surveillance systems

The italian strategy

PRIORITIES 3

□ Healthcare:

Improve good practices regarding:

- effective, proactive early interventions
- secondary prevention
- affordability and access to care

Prevention of Obesity

Lines of activity

- Development of **surveillance systems** to monitor the trends of obesity, behavioural risk factors and countermeasures
- Promotion, protection and support of **breastfeeding**
- Promotion of **fruit and vegetables** consumption
- **Alliance** with Educational sector to promote healthy diet and phisycal activity in schools

Prevention of Obesity

Lines of activity

- Cooperation with “Food industry” for **foods reformulation** (reduction of salt, saturated fats, sugar, portion size) and restriction of marketing and advertising to children
- Improvement and control of the **nutritional quality** of canteen menus at school and hospitals (*National guidelines*)
- Encouragement of public and private sectors to **promote and facilitate physical activity** (children, adolescents, workers, elderly, etc)

National guidelines on nutritional quality of canteen menus at school and hospitals



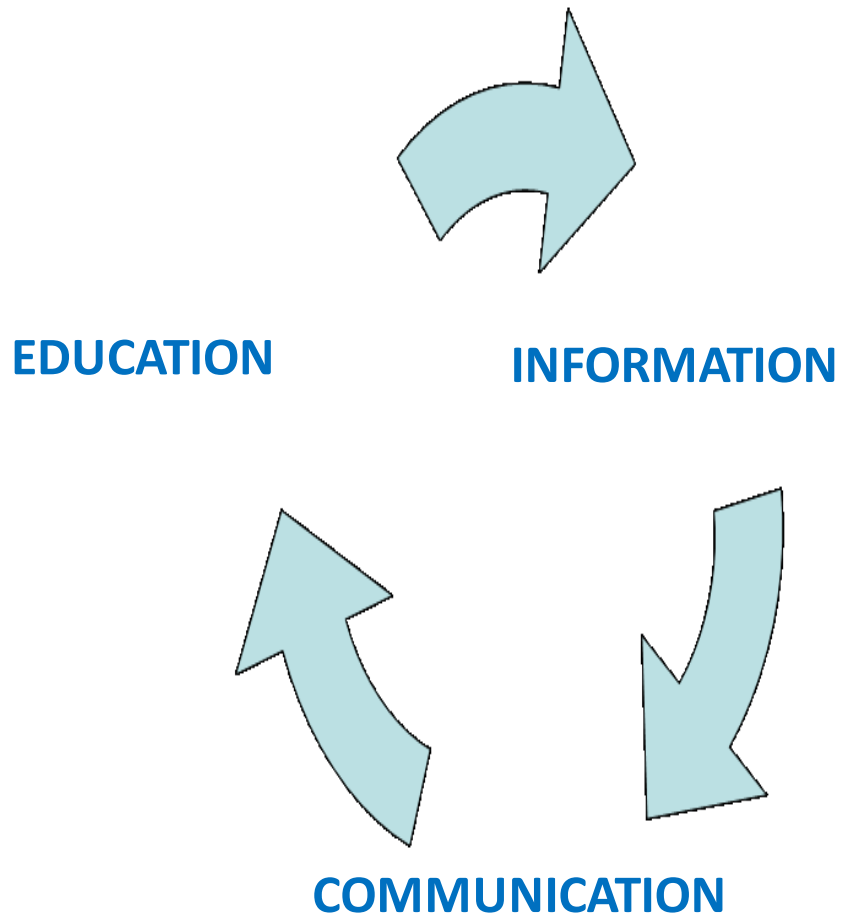
School



Hospitals

In progress for children hospitals

People and communities «empowerment»



- **Linked with Surveillance systems**
- **Aimed to inform and to promote healthy behaviours**
- **Based on different tools for different population targets**

Alliance with Education sector



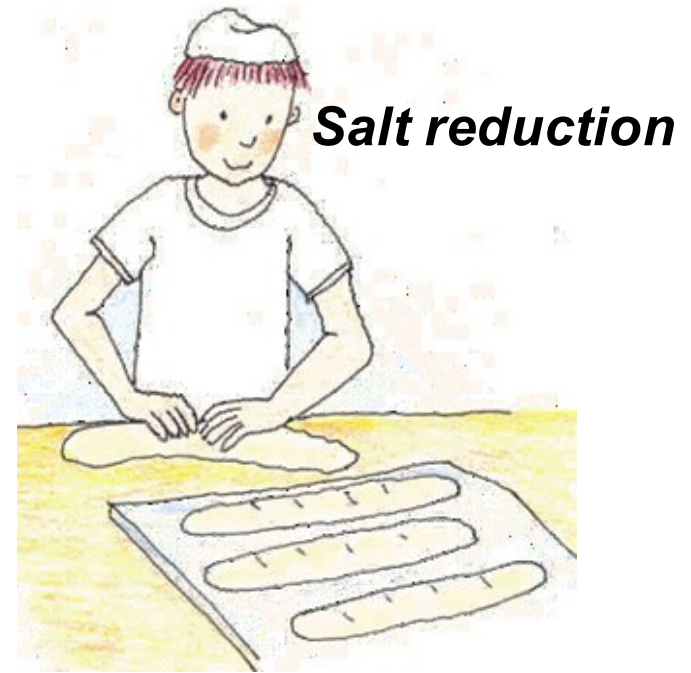
Communication campaigns



Promotion of PA



Promotion of healthy diet



Meno sale più salute



Promotion of Breastfeeding

From health promotion to primary care of people with obesity

Ensure:

- ☐ **early detection**
- ☐ **integrated network of health services for prevention, diagnosis and therapy**
- ☐ **involvement of General practitioners and Pediatricians**
- ☐ **integration and cooperation between health and social services, public and private institutions**
- ☐ **training of health professionals**

Next future

Reinforce the «multi-stakeholder» approach to develop integrated policies for healthy people

The EXPO 2015

A “big” occasion to promote:

- the positive health effects of the Mediterranean diet
- the production of high quality traditional foods
- healthy diet and lifestyles to prevent obesity and NCDs
- respect of the environment for a better quality of life
- international cooperation
- sharing of research and knowledge
- the culture of “inclusion” and “integration”, in a time of migrations
- food security and the Italian system of food safety as one of the most efficient and effective

Thanks for your attention!

d.galeone@sanita.it