
Author

Stefan Storcksdieck genannt Bonsmann
Scientific Project Officer

European Commission, Joint Research Centre, Ispra, Italy

Title

Promoting Health and Preventing Disease – The EU Knowledge Gateway

Abstract

Evidence-based healthcare professionals, such as dietitians and nutritionists often have to make sense of a plethora of scientific information from multiple sources, in a field that is rapidly evolving and often lacking scientific consensus. Policy makers face similar challenges: overflow of information, budget/time constraints, and contrasting political priorities.

Unhealthy diets, along with physical inactivity, harmful use of alcohol and use of tobacco, constitute the major non-communicable disease risk factors and are all preventable to a significant extent. To support European policy makers, professionals and citizens in mitigating these risk-factors and achieving better population health, the European Commission has created the [Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Knowledge Gateway](https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/health-knowledge-gateway). The Knowledge Gateway is a tailor-made website, a hub of independent and reliable information with well-structured short reference briefs on key policy topics related to diet and lifestyle determinants of health.

Each brief is structured in a similar manner; it defines the issue at hand and describes health-related implications. In addition, it provides a summary of EU data, policy recommendations, and examples of implemented policies. The content is supplemented by visual aids such as maps. A glossary of scientific terminology from high-level sources and a simple writing style make the contents fit for experts and non-experts alike.

The topics cover individual nutrients or food groups, alcohol-related harm, marketing of foods and beverages and physical activity, as well as related societal impacts such as health inequalities and disease burden. The website content is dynamic, with regular updates and expansion to new topic areas.

Key references

The Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Knowledge Gateway website:
<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/health-knowledge-gateway>

Key messages

- Unhealthy diets constitute a major yet preventable non-communicable disease risk factor.

- Evidence-based healthcare professionals, such as dietitians and nutritionists, have to make sense of a plethora of information, from multiple sources, in an evolving field often lacking scientific consensus.
- The Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Knowledge Gateway is a tailor-made online hub of independent and reliable information with structured briefs on key policy topics around diet and lifestyle determinants of health.