Nutrition policy status in Bulgaria

NOURISHING policy index

May 2023



This country snapshot presents detailed results of the **NOURISHING policy index** [1] for Bulgaria. It highlights strengths and weaknesses in the design of national government nutrition policies. This snapshot supplements the policy index results with an in-depth look at the quality of policy design in each country. Full policy index results are outlined in the NOURISHING policy brief, which compares Bulgaria to 29 other European countries.

Main messages

- **1** Bulgaria implements policy actions in six of the ten policy areas of the NOURISHING framework. The only policy area which received a good assessment refers to limits or removal of specific nutrients in food products (I1).
- 2 Gaps in regulations on food availability within the school vicinity, and on sugar-sweetened beverages in schools had an impact on otherwise well-designed standards on school food and food in out-of-education locations (O). Nutrition label standards and regulations (N1) only included existing EU level regulations, which need strengthening. Much more needs to be done in food marketing and advertising to young people, particularly in/around schools and at targeting different types of marketing (R).
- 3 No action was taken in just under half of the policy areas, and these should be prioritised. The national government should implement policies on nutrition advice and counselling in healthcare settings (N2) and nutrition education on curricula (G). Increased attention should be given to policies that target food environments and systems, specifically: using financial incentive which increase the availability and affordability of healthy food (U), creating a healthy retail and food service environment (S) along with food systems policies, such as on food procurement (H).

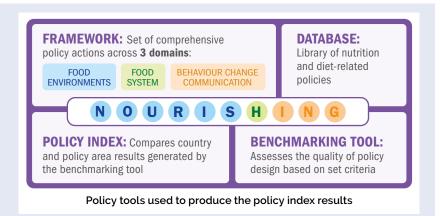
Overview of policy status	NO POLICIES IDENTIFIED	POOR	FAIR	MODERATE	GOOD	EXCELLENT
Nutrition label standards and regulations on the use of claims and implied claims on food					FAIR	
Offer healthy food and set standards in public institutions and other specific settings					MODERATE	
Use economic tools to address food affordability and purchase incentives					POOR	
Restrict food advertising and other forms of commercial promotion				POOR		
Improve nutritional quality of the whole food supply					GOOD	
S Set incentives and rules to create a healthy retail and food service environment					NO POLICIES IDENTIFIED	
H Harness supply chain and actions across sectors to ensure coherence with health				NO POLICIES IDENTIFIED		
Inform people about food and nutrition through public awareness					FAIR	
Nutrition advice and counselling in healthcare settings					NO POLICIES IDENTIFIED	
G Give nutrition education and skills					NO POLICIES IDENTIFIED	

This snapshot is based on national level policies only. Policies issued by provincial, regional or local governments are outside the scope of this project.

Methods

The NOURISHING policy index methods are fully explained in the associated **policy brief**. In short, the policy index combines values for a) policy presence, and b) policy design for 41 benchmarks.

The benchmarks are applied to policies in the **NOURISHING database** [2], collected through a comprehensive scan in 30 European countries, including Bulgaria.



Breakdown of policy index results (For full details on the policy design criteria, consult the policy brief) No policy identified Meets up to 75% of policy design criteria Meets up to 25% of policy design criteria Meets up to 99% of policy design criteria Meets up to 50% of policy design criteria Meets all aspirational standards

Nutrients on back of pack Front of pack labels Warning labels Rules on nutrient claims Rules on health claims Food and drink available in schools, including restrictions on unhealthy foods Measures relating to sugar-sweetened beverage provision in schools Fruit and vegetables initiatives in schools Frod and drink available in immediate vicinity of schools Unhealthy food in out-of-education locations Health-related food taxes or tariffs Income related subsidies or initiatives to increase affordability and accessibility of healthy food Targeted subsidies or initiatives to increase affordability and accessibility of healthy food Marketing to young people through advertising Direct marketing to young people Marketing through sponsorship to young people Marketing to young people through point of sale measures Marketing to young people through product placement and branding Marketing to young people through product design and packaging Marketing in/or around schools Limit or removal of specific nutrients			
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product design and packaging Marketing in/or around schools Limit or removal of specific nutrients			×
Limit or removal of specific nutrients			X
		Marketing in/or around schools	X
in food products		Limit or removal of specific nutrients in food products	

S	Planning restrictions regarding food service outlets around schools	X
	Planning restrictions on food service outlets	×
	Initiatives to increase the availability of healthier food in stores and food service outlets	×
Н	Measures to support food producers to increase healthy food and decrease unhealthy food in the supply chain	×
	Measures to support food manufacturers to increase healthy food and decrease unhealthy food in the supply chain	×
	Measures to support food retailers to increase healthy food and decrease unhealthy food in the supply chain	×
	Governance structures for multi- sectoral/stakeholder engagement	×
	Nutrition standards for public procurement	×
	Supporting urban agriculture in health and planning policies	×
	Community food production	X
	Development and communication of food-based dietary guidelines	
	Public awareness, mass media and informational campaigns and social marketing on healthy eating	×
N	Nutrition advice and counselling in primary care	×
	Nutrition advice and counselling in school healthcare setting	X
G	Nutrition education in curricula	X
	Training for educators	×
	Training for health professionals	×
	Cooking skills	×
	Training in schools in growing food	×
	Training for caterers	X

Note: The policy landscape in any country evolves over time. These findings reflect our knowledge as of May 2023. To see latest results and for further technical information on the policy indexes, please consult our website: wcrf.org/our-policy-work.

For feedback or suggested updates, please email policy@wcrf.org. More info in the CO-CREATE project can be found at co-create.eu

[1] Policy index: wcrf.org/nutrition-policy-index

[2] Policy database: policydatabase.wcrf.org





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