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World Health Organization
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Food and Health in Europe: A New Basis for Action



WHO Regional Office for Europe, Copenhagen
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Countries need a review of the scientific evidence to develop integrated and comprehensive national policies on food and nutrition. This book fills that need, providing a comprehensive, in-depth analysis of the data on nutritional health, foodborne disease, and food safety and public health concerns about the supply and security of food in Europe. Aimed at health professionals, this publication aims to strengthen their capacity as an efficient investment in improving public health in Europe. It highlights the urgent need for integrated, multisectoral food and nutrition policies to encourage the sustainable production of food, safe food production and the provision of food of high nutritional quality.

Poor nutrition, foodborne disease and lack of secure access to good food make an important contribution to the burden of disease and mortality in the WHO European Region. Better diets, food safety and food security will not only reduce or prevent suffering to individuals and societies but also help cut costs to health care systems and bring social and economic benefits to countries.

People's chances for a healthy diet depend less on individual choices than on what food is available and whether it is affordable. Policies to benefit health through good food and nutrition must extend beyond the health sector to include sectors ranging from agriculture and food processing, manufacturing and trade to transport, retailing, catering and advertising. Food and nutrition policies should be coordinated so that public health is given due priority in the making of food policies by non-health sectors.

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Summary



Aimed at policy-makers, this booklet summarizes the larger publication that discusses the components of food and nutrition policies and the evidence supporting them. It describes food- and nutrition-related ill health and its costs, shows the need for action and describes the steps for policy-makers to take. The larger book and this summary highlight the urgent need for integrated, multisectoral food and nutrition policies to encourage the sustainable production of food, its safety and the provision of food of high nutritional quality for all.

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