Monotoring and surveillance
Overweight and obesity in three age groups

Adults (18/20 years and over)
Intercountry comparable overweight and obesity estimates from 2008 (1) show that 60.5% of the adult population (≥ 20 years old) in Germany were overweight and 25.1% were obese. The prevalence of overweight was higher among men (66.8%) than women (54.5%). The proportion of men and women that were obese was 25.9% and 24.4%, respectively.

Nationally representative data collected in 2008–2011 show that 67.1% of men and 53.0% of women aged 18–79 years were overweight (based on measured

Notes. The country codes refer to the ISO 3166-1 Alpha-3 country codes. Data ranking for obesity is intentionally the same as for the overweight data. BMI: body mass index. Source: WHO Global Health Observatory Data Repository (1).

The Regional Office is grateful to the European Commission (EC) for its financial support for the preparation of this country profile and the development of the nutrition, obesity and physical activity database that provided data for it.
height and weight). The proportion of men and women that were obese was 23.3% and 23.9%, respectively (2). It should be taken into account that these data do not allow for comparability across countries due to sampling and methodological differences.

Adulthood obesity prevalence forecasts (2010–2030) predict that in 2020, 20% of men and 18% of women will be obese. By 2030, the model predicts that 24% of men and 21% of women will be obese.¹

**Adolescents (10–19 years)**

In terms of prevalence of overweight and obesity in adolescents, up to 23% of boys and 14% of girls among 11-year-olds were overweight, according to data from the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) survey (2009/2010).²

Among 13-year-olds, the corresponding figures were 21% for boys and 16% for girls, and among 15-year-olds, 21% and 12%, respectively (3).

**Children (0–9 years)**

No prevalence figures are available for overweight and obesity in schoolchildren based on measured intercountry comparable data. Germany is not yet participating in the WHO European Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative (COSI).

However, nationally representative data (based on measurements of height and weight) from 2003–2006 show that 9.1% of children aged 3–6 years (8.9% boys, 9.3% girls) and 15.4% of children aged 7–10 years (15.9% boys, 14.7% girls) were overweight (4). A total of 2.9% of the children aged 3–6 years (2.5% boys, 3.3% girls) and 6.4% of those aged 7–10 years (7.0% boys, 5.7% girls) were obese. It should be taken into account that these figures (which are based on the Kromeyer-Hauschild et al. growth reference (5)) do not allow for comparability across countries.

**Exclusive breastfeeding until 6 months of age**

Nationally representative data from 2003–2006 show that the prevalence of exclusive breastfeeding at 6 months of age was 22.4% in Germany.³

**Saturated fat intake**

According to the 2007 estimates of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the adult population in Germany consumed 11.7% of their total calories from saturated fatty acids (6). According to national data from 2012, male adults consumed 15.7% and female adults consumed 15.4% of their total calorie intake from saturated fatty acids (7). It should be taken into account that these latter, national data do not allow for comparability across countries due to sampling and methodological differences.

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¹ Report on modelling adulthood obesity across the WHO European Region, prepared by consultants (led by T. Marsh and colleagues) for the WHO Regional Office for Europe in 2013.

² Based on 2007 WHO growth reference.

³ WHO Regional Office for Europe grey literature from 2012 on breastfeeding.
Fruit and vegetable supply
Germany had a fruit and vegetable supply of 482 grams per capita per day, according to 2009 estimates (6).

Salt intake
Data from 2011 show that salt intake in Germany was 9.0 grams per day for men and 6.5 grams per day for women (8).

Iodine status
According to the most recent estimates on iodine status, published in 2012, the proportion of the population with an iodine level lower than 100 µg/L was 38.8% (9, 10).
Physical inactivity
In Germany, 46.6% of the population aged 15 years and over were insufficiently active (men 43.6% and women 49.4%), according to estimates generated for 2008 by WHO (1). A national survey carried out in 2008–2011 revealed that 74.6% of men and 84.5% of women aged 18–79 years were physically active for less than 2.5 hours per week (11). It should be taken into account that these latter data do not allow for comparability across countries due to sampling and methodological differences.

Policies and actions
The table below displays (a) monitoring and evaluation methods of salt intake in Germany; (b) the stakeholder approach toward salt reduction; and (c) the population approach in terms of labelling and consumer awareness initiatives (8).

Salt reduction initiatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monitoring &amp; evaluation</th>
<th>Stakeholder approach</th>
<th>Population approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Labelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry self-reporting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt content in food</td>
<td>XXX (bread)</td>
<td>Industry involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt intake</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer awareness</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural change</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urinary salt excretion (24 hrs)</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XX</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: XXX partially implemented; XXXX fully implemented.

Trans fatty acids (TFA) policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legislation</th>
<th>Type of legislation</th>
<th>Measure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Voluntary</td>
<td>Voluntary industry action</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WHO Regional Office for Europe grey literature from 2012 on diet and the use of fiscal policy in the control and prevention of noncommunicable diseases; EC School Fruit Scheme website (12).

Marketing of food and non-alcoholic beverages to children (13)
The Federal Ministry of Health and the Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection have made the promotion of healthy lifestyles the main health and nutrition policy objective, placing strong emphasis on reducing overweight and obesity. The Federal Government’s National Action Plan (14) “IN FORM – German national initiative to promote healthy diets and physical activity” involves – inter alia – meetings with industry aimed at preventing any advertising targeting children aged under 12 years of age and formulating a voluntary code of conduct for advertising activities targeting older children and adolescents.

According to federal law, marketing must comply with the legal framework established to control unfair competition (15). The law prohibits any type of advertising that directly invites children to buy a marketed product themselves or to take up a marketed service themselves, or cause their parents or other adults to do so. Advertising on the radio and TV (as well as teleshopping) are subject to provisions on the protection of minors set out in section 6 of the Interstate Treaty on the Protection of Human Dignity and the Protection of Minors in Broadcasting and in Telemedia (16).

In 2009 the German Advertising Federation (17) developed a special Code of Conduct on Commercial Communication for Foods and Beverages for the protection of children with regard to advertising on radio and TV (18). The general rules of the code emphasize that advertising should not: (a) abuse consumers’ confidence; (b) undermine a healthy and active lifestyle; (c) undermine a balanced and healthy diet; or (d) encourage excessive consumption. The code stipulates that there should be: (a) no direct demand for children to purchase; (b) no direct demand for children to convince their parents to purchase; (c) no exploitation of children’s confidence and; (d) no inducements to purchase.

Physical activity (PA), national policy documents and action plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Target groups</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Transportation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Existence of national “sport for all” policy and/or national “sport for all” implementation programme</td>
<td>Existence of specific scheme or programme for community interventions to promote PA in the elderly</td>
<td>Counselling on PA as part of primary health care activities</td>
<td>Mandatory physical education in primary and secondary schools</td>
<td>Inclusion of PA in general teaching training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Clearly stated in a policy document, partially implemented or enforced. ▲ Clearly stated in a policy document, entirely implemented and enforced.

Source: country reporting template on Germany from 2008 developed in the context of a WHO/EC project on monitoring progress on improving nutrition and PA and preventing obesity in the European Union (EU).
Leadership, partnerships and professional networks on health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existence of national coordination mechanism on HEPA</th>
<th>Leading institution</th>
<th>Participating bodies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✅ 2007</td>
<td>Federal Ministry of Health and Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection</td>
<td>Government departments on health, agriculture, food, consumer affairs, sport, transport, urban planning, education and research, social welfare, labour, culture; nongovernmental organizations; academia; civil society; communities; private sector</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: country reporting template on Germany from 2009 developed in the context of a WHO/EC project on monitoring progress on improving nutrition and PA and preventing obesity in the EU.

PA recommendations, goals and surveillance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existence of national recommendation on HEPA</th>
<th>Target groups addressed by national HEPA policy</th>
<th>PA included in the national health monitoring system</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✅</td>
<td>General population</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: country reporting template on Germany from 2009 developed in the context of a WHO/EC project on monitoring progress on improving nutrition and PA and preventing obesity in the EU.

References