



Halting the rise of childhood obesity through an EU coordinated approach

Dr Charmaine Gauci
Superintendent of Public Health/Director General PH
Coordinator, Maltese Presidency: Childhood Obesity
Ministry for Health, Malta



MALTAEU2017

The Trio Programme

- Guided by the strategic agenda of the European Council adopted in June 2014
- **A UNION THAT EMPOWERS AND PROTECTS ALL ITS CITIZENS**



MALTA EU2017

The Trio Programme

- “The protection of the health of EU citizens remains a key objective. The three Presidencies will take forward discussions on ways to **improve the health status of the EU population**, by **fighting non-communicable diseases**, the availability of and **access to innovative and affordable medicines** for patients as well as **cooperation between Member States' health systems...**”



MALTA EU2017

See, Council of the European Union, “Taking forward the Strategic Agenda - 18 month programme of the Council (1 January 2016 - 30 June 2017, Doc 15258/15, Brussels, pg.13.

Health Thematic Priorities for Malta EU 2017

- Non Communicable Diseases - Childhood Obesity: Halting the Rise
- Voluntary structured co-operation between Health Systems
- Communicable Disease - HIV prevention and control across the EU
- Data for Health - The key to personalised sustainable care



MALTAEU2017

Non Communicable Diseases Childhood Obesity: Halting the Rise



MALTA EU2017



PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIAT
FOR THE EU PRESIDENCY 2017 AND EU FUNDS

Childhood obesity: relevance at EU level

In the WHO European Region

1 in 3 
11-year-olds is
overweight
or
obese



EU ACTION



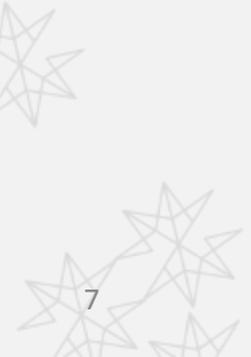
2004: Green paper on promoting healthy diets and physical activity

2005: European platform for action on diet, PA and health

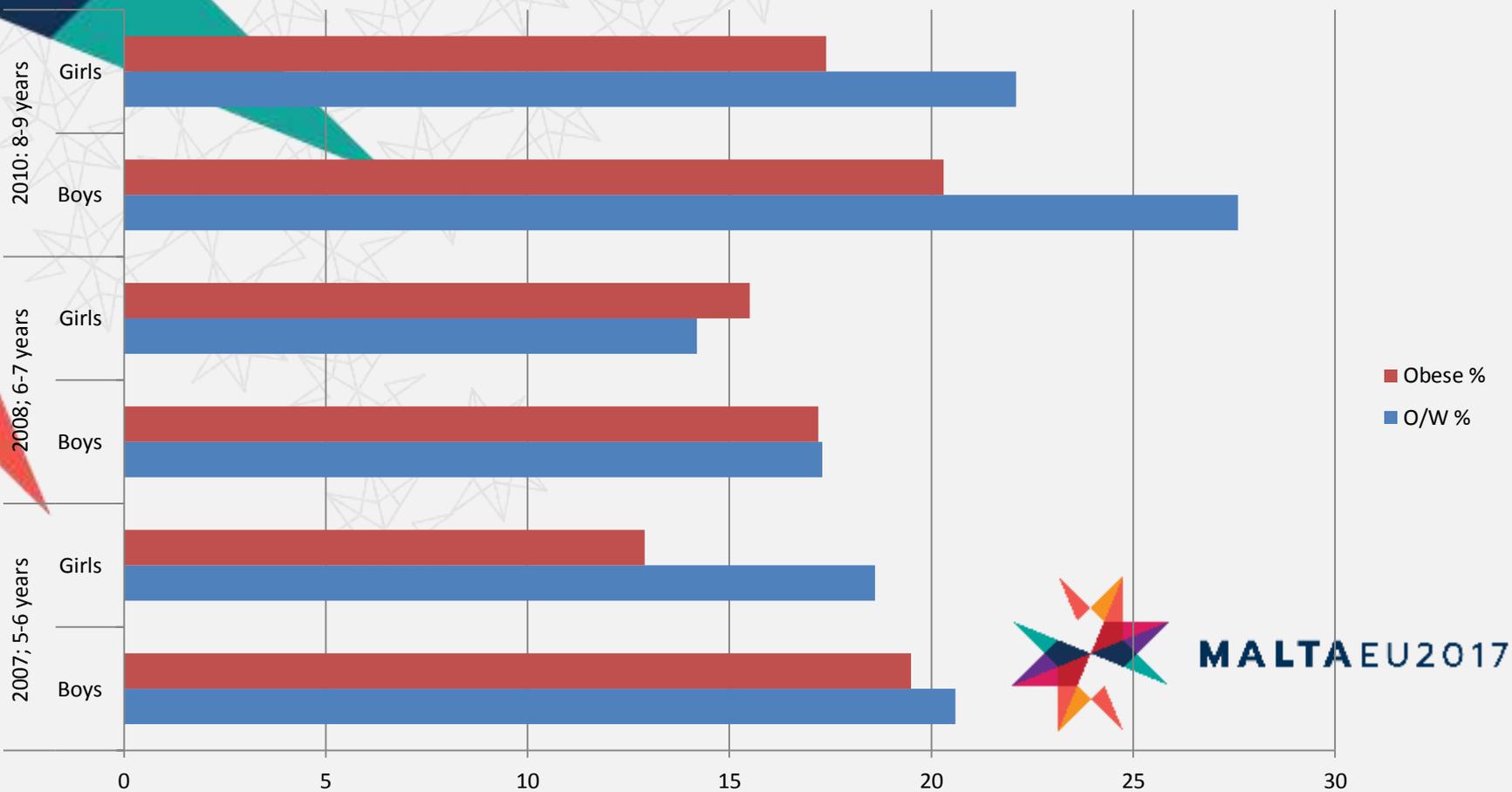
2007: Strategy on nutrition, overweight and obesity related health issues

2014: EU action plan on childhood obesity (2014-2020) + Council Conclusions

2016: Roadmap + Council conclusions on food product improvement



Relevance at Local Level



MALTA EU2017

Relevance at Local Level

- 2012 :Healthy weight for life strategy
- 2014: Food and Nutrition Policy and Action Plan
- 2015: Breastfeeding policy
- 2015: Whole of school approach to healthy lifestyles

- Still high burden of obesity
- Limitations in actions at local level
 - 80% food imported
 - Benefit from exposure to actions which work



MALTAEU2017

Presidency Priority

Childhood obesity: halting the rise

- 2 main focus areas
 - Strategic approach: mid term evaluation of the EU Childhood obesity action plan 2014-2020
 - Supporting tool : Food procurement for health in schools



MALTAEU2017

Strategic Approach

Evaluation of the EU Action Plan on Childhood Obesity 2014-2020

Plan outlined in 2014 aims to halt rise in childhood obesity in EU by 2020 through 8 areas:

- Support a healthy start in life
- Promote healthier environments, especially in schools and pre-schools
- Make the healthy option the easier option
- Restrict marketing and advertising to children
- Inform and empower families
- Encourage physical activity
- Monitor and evaluate
- Increase research.



MALTAEU2017

Mid-term Evaluation of Action Plan

- Mid term evaluation to see situation in Member States
 - Identify good practices
 - Identify areas of concern
 - Outline how EU and MS can step up actions on childhood obesity
 - Development of council conclusions



MALTA EU 2017

Supporting Tool:

Food Procurement for Health in Schools: Why ?

- School aged children in Europe consume at least one meal in schools
- Opportunity for food to comply with good nutrition principles
- Government responsibility to protect public health
- Implementation of healthy food procurement improves markers of healthy eating



MALTAEU2017

Food Procurement for Health in Schools : How?

- Providing an enabling environment for healthy preferences
- Overcoming barriers to the expression of healthy preferences
- Encouraging people to reassess existing unhealthy preferences at point of purchase
- Stimulate food-systems response : innovation and product improvement



MALTAEU2017

Food Procurement for Health in Schools : What?

- Development of guiding principles
- Added value and opportunity for all
- Voluntary public procurement guidelines for foods for schools which can be adapted for use by MS



MALTAEU2017

Guidance on Food Procurement for Health in Schools: Outline

- What is public procurement and what do we mean with food procurement for health?
- Why should we consider public procurement of foods for health in schools?
- What can the impact be on children, schools and the food environment?
- EU examples of food procurement for health
- What are the barriers and can they be overcome?
- Guidance on school food standards and food procurement criteria for health



MALTAEU2017

Preparatory Meeting on Public Food Procurement Guidelines

- 1-2 December 2016 in Malta
- Malta presidency team
- DG Santé
- Joint Research Centre
- 14 MS representatives on High Level Working groups on nutrition and physical activity
- Discussion of guidelines with emphasis on implementation

Technical Workshop 22-23rd February 2017



MALTA EU2017



Informal meeting of the Health Ministers 20th March 2017

Childhood obesity on agenda

Outline the burden of childhood obesity

Impact on various sectors

Give health ministers the voice of Europe to act

Translate technical evidence based information
to political messages

Council conclusions

Based on good practices
Areas we need to act upon
Coordinated action across MS

Halt the Rise