



## JANPA in BRIEF

### **The Joint Action on Nutrition and Physical Activity - JANPA A European collaborative action to stop the rise of overweight and obesity in children and adolescents by 2020**

28 September 2015 - The main objective of **JANPA**, the European **Joint Action on Nutrition and Physical Activity**, is to stop the rise of overweight and obesity in children and adolescents by 2020, focusing on specific outcomes that strongly contribute to the nutritional and physical activity policies dedicated to childhood. Through the sharing, identification, and selection of best data and practices within the **26 countries** involved, JANPA (which is a direct contribution to the EU Action Plan on Childhood Obesity 2014-2020) will be able:

- to estimate and forecast the economic costs of overweight and obesity
- to improve the implementation of integrated interventions to promote healthy nutrition and physical activity for pregnant women and families with young children
- to contribute to healthier school environments
- to increase the use of nutritional information of foods by public health authorities, stakeholders and families

#### **The European context of obesity**

In all the Member States (MS) of the European Union (EU), the high level of overweight and obesity in children and young people is a problem of particular concern. The World Health Organization (WHO) reported that in the EU, in 2010, about 1 in 3 children, aged 6-9 years old were overweight or obese: a sharp rise in prevalence, despite the numerous initiatives at national and regional level.

Physical inactivity and poor diet from birth (and even *in utero*) are important determinants of adiposity leading to overweight and obesity. They are also independently associated with various risk factors of non-communicable diseases that affect many Europeans (e.g. cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes, certain cancers and musculoskeletal disorders). Furthermore, overweight and obesity may also have detrimental psychological and social consequences in later life.

Overweight and obesity are also an economic burden for national health systems, with up to 7% of the EU health budgets spent each year on diseases linked directly to obesity, and with additional indirect costs resulting from productivity loss associated with health problems and premature death.

#### **A multi-sectorial approach**

**JANPA** offers a unique opportunity to collectively analyse selected actions and to discuss recommendations on best practices for childhood overweight and obesity prevention. This will also reinforce the links between the different national nutrition policies **introduced** by the EU Strategy on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related health issues

Overweight and obesity prevention needs a multi-sectorial approach involving key sectors and allowing integrated actions. Clear health objectives are essential in order to provide the best results.

Education and personal responsibility are important elements of any program conceived to reduce obesity but they are not sufficient, particularly to reduce social inequalities in nutrition-related health problems.

A life course approach is also necessary to address the problem, as there are rapid global changes towards sedentary life-styles and towards unhealthy alimentation. The promotion of a healthy diet already should start during pregnancy and breastfeeding. The endorsement of healthy life-styles in children and adolescents is particularly important since they will be maintained into adulthood and may also influence overall domestic behaviour and habits.

The improvement of the nutritional quality of the foods consumed by the whole population and the improvement of the physical environment in order to make the healthy choice the easiest are essential to reduce nutritional-related diseases.

### Who is involved?

25 out of the 28 MS will participate in **JANPA**, either as associated or as collaborating partners. In addition, Norway will also take part, for a total of **26 countries**.

### Who is the target?

The main target groups are the decision-makers, health professionals and schools, who work on the implementation of actions to improve healthy nutrition and physical activity among children, and mothers and families, who are the final target populations. **JANPA** would also like to reach broader categories of stakeholders, such as regional and local authorities, educational institutions, health communities, universities, non-profit organisations, citizens and consumers associations, youths and sports associations, industries, service companies and the media.

### Our work

To achieve its objectives, JANPA is organised in **7 Workpackages (WP)**:

- **WP1 – Coordination.** Ensure the success of the Joint Action (JA) by efficient management and coordination of the different WPs.
- **WP2 – Dissemination.** Promote the JA objectives and activities and, most important, disseminate the results with the involvement of the relevant stakeholders.
- **WP3 – Evaluation.** Carry out a systematic evaluation of the entire project, the accomplishment of the objectives and the impact and outcomes.
- **WP4 – Evidence and Economic rationale for action on childhood obesity.** Develop an evidence-based economic rationale for action on childhood obesity.
- **WP5 – Nutritional information.** Share the best practices on how nutritional information on food and diet is gathered and used for nutritional policy by the different stakeholders.
- **WP6 – Healthy environments by integrated approaches.** Help MSs to create healthier environments, in particular in kindergartens and schools, by providing guidance on policy options and national initiatives.
- **WP7 – Early interventions.** Improve the quality of public policies and interventions by developing information on efficient actions that target pregnant women and families with young children.



### **Involvement of The German Nutrition Society**

The German Nutrition Society (Department for Communal Catering and Quality assurances) together with the Institute of Sport Science and Sport of the Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg represent Germany within WP6.

JANPA starts on September 1<sup>st</sup> 2015 and will last 27 months.

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