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TECHNICAL REPORT

The EU Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health

Third Monitoring Progress Report

Michael Hallsworth, Joachim Krapels, Tom Ling

Prepared for Unit 02 of the European Commission's Health and Consumer
Protection Directorate-General

The research described in this report was prepared for the European Commission. The opinions expressed in this study are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission.

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Preface

This Monitoring Progress Report presents the achievements of the EU Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health in 2007, only the second full year of its operation. The EU Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health was launched in March 2005 to “provide a common forum for all interested actors at European level where: (a) they can explain their plans to contribute concretely to the pursuit of healthy nutrition, physical activity and the fight against obesity, and where those plans can be discussed; (b) outcomes and experience from actors’ performance can be reported and reviewed, so that over time better evidence is assembled of what works, and Best Practice more clearly defined.”¹

The main purpose of this Monitoring Progress Report is to communicate the achievements of the Platform, as represented in 148 monitoring forms submitted by Platform members. Chapter 2 gives an overview of the Platform’s achievements, which are mapped in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 highlights areas of monitoring practice that the RAND Europe team identified as being particularly important or relevant to the Platform. Chapter 5 describes the development of a process to assess the quality of the monitoring forms quantitatively and presents the results generated by the application of this process. Chapter 6 offers RAND Europe’s conclusions on the Platform’s achievements and the standard of monitoring practices employed by its members. A significant amount of the material produced for this report can also be found in the EU Platform’s 2008 Annual Report.²

This Monitoring Progress Report was prepared for, and funded by, the Health and Consumer Protection Directorate General of the European Commission (DG SANCO). It will allow Platform members, DG SANCO and other interested stakeholders to understand the extent to which it is possible to provide a clear and compelling account of the Platform’s impact. This Monitoring Progress Report should be of interest to officials of the European Commission who deal with diet, exercise and health; to Platform members; and to a wider audience of policy-makers and researchers who are interested in the

¹ EU Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health (2005): Diet, Physical Activity and Health – A European Platform for Action.
http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/nutrition/platform/docs/platform_charter.pdf (accessed 23 June 2008).

² EU Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health (2008) Annual Report. Available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/nutrition/platform/docs/eu_platform_2008frep_en.pdf (accessed 23 June 2008).

feasibility, acceptability and sustainability of delivering agreed objectives through non-hierarchical instruments.

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http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/nutrition/platform/platform_en.htm

³ For more information on RAND Europe, please see: www.randeurope.org

Table of contents

Preface.....	iii
Abbreviations.....	vii
Definitions of terms used.....	ix
Acknowledgements.....	xi
Executive summary.....	xiii
CHAPTER 1 Introduction	1
CHAPTER 2 The achievements of the Platform.....	3
2.1 Introduction.....	3
2.2 The food environment	8
2.3 The eating environment	22
2.4 Physical activity.....	42
2.5 Research.....	48
CHAPTER 3 An overview of the Platform commitments	53
3.1 Mapping of Commitments.....	53
3.2 Conclusion.....	55
CHAPTER 4 Aspects of monitoring that are relevant to the Platform	57
4.1 Introduction.....	57
4.2 The nature of monitoring.....	57
4.3 Aspects of monitoring that are relevant to the Platform	58
CHAPTER 5 Quality assessment of monitoring forms	61
5.1 Introduction.....	61
5.2 Methodology.....	61
5.3 Results	66
5.4 Comparison with 2007.....	71
5.5 Summary.....	71
CHAPTER 6 Conclusions	73
REFERENCES.....	75

References	77
APPENDICES	83
Appendix A: Map of commitments	85

Abbreviations

APRIFEL	Agence Fruits et Légumes Frais
AREFLH	Fruit, Vegetable and Horticultural European Regions
ARESP	Associação da Restauração e Similares de Portugal (FERCO member)
BMI	Body Mass Index
CEEREAL	The European Cereal Breakfast Association)
CIAA	Confederation of the Food and Drink Industries of the European Union
CPME	Comité Permanent des Médecins Européens (The Standing Committee of European Doctors)
DG SANCO	Health and Consumer Protection Directorate General of the European Commission
EASA	European Advertising Standards Alliance
EASO	European Association for the Study of Obesity
EEN	EPODE European Network
EFAD	European Federation of the Associations of Dietitians
EHFA	European Health and Fitness Association
EMRA	European Modern Restaurants Association
EROSKI	The EuroCoop member for Spain
ESA	European Snack Association
EU	European Union
EUFIC	European Food Information Council
EVA	European Vending Association
FENACOOOP	Federação Nacional Das Cooperativas de Consumidores (Portuguese Consumers Co-operative Society)
FEPI	Federation of the European Play Industry
FERCO	European Federation for Contract Catering Organisations

FEVIA	Belgian National Food and Drink Industry Federation
FIA	Fitness Industry Association
FNSEA	Fédération nationale des syndicats d'exploitants agricoles (French Farmer's Union)
FSA	Food Standards Agency
GDA	Guideline daily amount
HDE	German Retail Association
HFSS	High Fat, Sugar and Salt
IBFAN	International Baby Food Action Network
ICC	International Chamber of Commerce
IOTF	International Obesity Task Force
JEP	Jury for Ethical Practice in Advertising (Belgium)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NUBEL	Nutrition Belgium
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SCOPE	Specialist Certification of Obesity Professional Education
SFA	Sport For All
SRO	Self-regulatory organisation
UBA	Union of Belgian Advertisers
UK	United Kingdom
UNESDA	Union of European Beverages Associations
WFA	World Federation of Advertisers
WHO	World Health Organisation

Definitions of terms used

Commitment	To become a member of the EU Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, an organisation must undertake a “commitment”. These commitments are promises to take actions to achieve a particular goal that advances the Platform’s aims.
Actions	Some commitments include multiple actions that allow the commitment as a whole to be achieved (although this is not desirable because it complicates the monitoring process). “Actions” therefore refer to different tasks contained within a commitment.
Objectives	Objectives define what the commitment (and therefore its actions) is trying to achieve. Objectives should be specific and clear and should include targets that are feasible.
Inputs	Inputs are the resources used to accomplish an objective. For example, the amount of money used to produce a healthy-eating leaflet would be an input.
Outputs	Outputs are the immediate products of an action. For example, this could be the number of healthy-eating leaflets produced by a Platform member.
Outcomes	Outcomes are the wider consequences of an action. For example, this could be the change in diets created as a result of consumers reading a healthy-eating leaflet. There are difficulties in attributing outcomes to a particular action.

Acknowledgements

The members of the team at RAND Europe would like to express their appreciation to the staff of DG SANCO Unit 02, in particular Jonathan Back.

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Executive summary

The Platform

The EU Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health was launched in March 2005 to “provide a common forum for all interested actors at European level where: (a) they can explain their plans to contribute concretely to the pursuit of healthy nutrition, physical activity and the fight against obesity, and where those plans can be discussed; (b) outcomes and experience from actors’ performance can be reported and reviewed, so that over time better evidence is assembled of what works, and Best Practice more clearly defined.”⁴

This Monitoring Progress Report presents the achievements of the EU Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health in 2007. It also examines how successfully the Platform’s members are monitoring the Platform’s progress. This report builds on research and analysis conducted by RAND Europe for the EU Platform’s Second Monitoring Progress Report in 2007.⁵

Achievements

The information on the Platform’s achievements that is included in this Monitoring Progress Report is derived from RAND Europe’s analysis of 148 monitoring forms submitted by Platform members by the deadline of 31 January 2008. This report does not include all the commitments being undertaken as part of the Platform because not all Platform members submitted monitoring forms for their commitments or they submitted them after this deadline. All of the Platform commitments, which numbered over 200 for 2007, can be accessed via the online Platform database.⁶

This report attempts to include information on all of these achievements, except where the specificity, clarity, focus or measurement displayed in the monitoring forms was so poor that it was not possible to communicate their content in a meaningful way, or when the actions were not applicable to 2007. It should be noted that the inclusion of information

⁴ EU Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health (2005): Diet, Physical Activity and Health – A European Platform for Action.
http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/nutrition/platform/docs/platform_charter.pdf (accessed 23 June 2008).

⁵ Hallsworth, M. and Ling, T. (2007) *The EU Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health: Second Monitoring Progress Report*, RAND, TR-474-EC.

⁶ Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/nutrition/platform/platform_en.htm (accessed 23 June 2008).

on commitments in this Monitoring Progress Report does not mean that the RAND Europe team has independently verified such information.

This report illustrates the considerable range of activities associated with the Platform in 2007. These activities include: measures to improve the labelling of food products; schemes to reformulate food products; initiatives to modify the range of products available and their portion sizes; activities to address advertising and marketing; attempts to educate and inform European citizens about nutrition and physical activity in general and the health qualities of particular products; changing food consumption patterns at the point of purchase; implementing workplace based programmes to improve healthy lifestyles; attempts to influence policy-makers; projects to promote participation in sport and non-sport physical activities; programmes to facilitate access to sports activities; sponsoring sports teams and events; and conducting and supporting research. In terms of crude numbers, the areas of nutrition education and information, product labelling and advertising controls have been covered by the most commitments, with relatively few commitments addressing the physical activity sector.

Progress in monitoring

In order to measure the standard of monitoring that is being undertaken by the Platform members with greater precision, in 2007 RAND Europe developed a process to assess the quality levels of monitoring forms by scoring them from 1 to 5 on four criteria: specificity, focus, measurement and clarity. RAND Europe utilised this scoring mechanism again for the current report. A crude interpretation of these scores suggests that, on average, the monitoring forms just meet an “adequate” standard where: objectives are sufficiently clear to be understood, and include some quantitative targets and timescales; reporting allows, with some effort, an understanding of what has been done; there is a focus on many important activities, whilst less attention is paid to more trivial activities; and, on balance, there is an approach to measurement that is appropriate, if not complete. Nevertheless, it should be noted that 46.3% of monitoring forms fall short of this “adequate level”.

It is noticeable that scores for new commitments were lower than for those commitments that continued from 2006 to 2007; the scores for these continuing commitments increased from last year’s scoring exercise, which may suggest that Platform membership has encouraged a learning process with regard to monitoring. However, these averages conceal many variations between different categories, as well as between different selections of commitments (for example, new and continuing commitments). For example, there were variations within the different categories used to carry out the quality assessment: commitments tended to score higher on measurement and clarity than on specificity and focus, a finding that was also present in the Second Monitoring Progress Report. Interpretations of the scoring exercise should therefore be made with care and with reference to the appropriate category, as well as to the selection of commitments concerned.

Conclusion

Like its predecessor, this Monitoring Progress Report shows that the Platform can point to a wide range of activities and achievements that reflect the diverse capacities of the Platform members. Again, a plausible case can be made for linking these claimed

achievements to a successful delivery of the aims of the Platform. In addition, this Monitoring Progress Report suggests that Platform members continue to develop a range of skills in producing monitoring data, although the picture is complicated by the fact that the Platform's membership is continually in flux. However, it is clear that significant variations in the quality of reports remain, and that some Platform members are struggling with the monitoring of their commitments.

The EU Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health was launched in March 2005 to “provide a common forum for all interested actors at European level where: (a) they can explain their plans to contribute concretely to the pursuit of healthy nutrition, physical activity and the fight against obesity, and where those plans can be discussed; (b) outcomes and experience from actors’ performance can be reported and reviewed, so that over time better evidence is assembled of what works, and Best Practice more clearly defined.”⁷

In 2008, RAND Europe provided the Health and Consumer Protection Directorate General of the European Commission (DG SANCO) with support for its role in facilitating the monitoring activities of the Platform. As well as requesting the provision of independent expertise on monitoring, the Monitoring Group also wanted an analysis of, and report on, the monitoring activities of Platform members. This support built on similar work that RAND Europe carried out for DG SANCO in 2007, which resulted in the EU Platform’s Second Monitoring Progress Report, and many sections of this report reproduce material from the preceding report, if it is still relevant.⁸

This Monitoring Progress Report outlines RAND Europe’s analysis of 148 monitoring forms completed by Platform members and submitted to the European Commission by 31 January 2008. This Monitoring Progress Report does not include all the commitments being undertaken as part of the Platform because not all Platform members submitted monitoring forms for their commitments. If a member of the Platform did not submit a monitoring form for a commitment, that commitment does not appear in this document. All of the Platform commitments, which numbered over 200 for 2007, can be accessed via the online Platform database.⁹

The main purpose of this Monitoring Progress Report is to communicate the achievements of the Platform members, as represented in the monitoring forms. RAND Europe endeavoured to treat each monitoring form in a wholly objective manner: our intention was simply to communicate clearly the information contained in the form. Since the

⁷ EU Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, Diet, Physical Activity and Health – A European Platform for Action, 15 March 2005.
http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/nutrition/platform/docs/platform_charter.pdf.

⁸ Hallsworth, M. and Ling, T. (2007).

⁹ Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/nutrition/platform/platform_en.htm (accessed 23 June 2008).

RAND Europe team could not check the sources of such information, it cannot guarantee that the statements representing the Platform's achievements are accurate. This Monitoring Progress Report does not comment on the relevance of particular commitments to the aims of the Platform.

This Monitoring Progress Report also offers an overall assessment of the Platform members' monitoring practices. RAND Europe fully recognises the practical challenges that face Platform members when they are monitoring their commitments. The quantitative scoring system we have developed for assessing the quality of the Platform's monitoring suggests that the overall standard of monitoring has improved slightly since the last exercise was conducted, in 2007. This conclusion is complicated by the fact that many commitments have ceased and many commenced since the last scoring exercise, and that significant variations remain amongst Platform members regarding how well they have addressed the various aspects of monitoring.

The Monitoring Progress Report is organised into the following sections: Executive Summary; Chapter One: Introduction; Chapter Two: The achievements of the Platform; Chapter Three: An overview of the Platform commitments; Chapter Four: Aspects of monitoring relevant to the Platform; Chapter Five: Quality assessment of monitoring forms; Chapter Six: Conclusions.

2.1 **Introduction**

This chapter details the initiatives undertaken by members of the Platform in 2007, and the results these initiatives produced. It also gives a brief overview of some research that is relevant to the areas in which Platform members are active. This chapter presents only the activities that were recorded in the 148 monitoring forms submitted by the Platform. Not every member submitted a monitoring form for their activity and therefore this chapter provides an incomplete account of the activities of the Platform's members. Anyone who wishes to discover the full range of Platform activities can use the Platform online searchable database, which contains details of every Platform commitment.¹⁰ Each statement in this report concerning a commitment is followed by a number in parenthesis, which is the Platform database number for that commitment. The next section explains how the text for this chapter was produced.

2.1.1 **Methodology**

Firstly, RAND Europe drew on the knowledge and experience it gained during the process of producing the Second Monitoring Progress Report for the Platform in 2007. The main difference in the 2008 process was that the European Commission introduced a new system for gathering information on commitments, which was based on a single form (rather than the previous system of a basic commitment form and a monitoring report). The single form comprised a section containing the basic details about a commitment, followed by sections to be completed each year to report on annual achievements. The single form was introduced to simplify the Platform's reporting procedures, allowing the information on a commitment to be updated easily as it evolves.

In February 2008, the European Commission sent the RAND Europe team the electronic files of the 148 monitoring forms that it had received from Platform members by 31 January 2008. The RAND Europe team engaged a single analyst to read all of the monitoring forms and to produce cogent, accurate summaries of the content of each form. This task required the analyst to apply a consistent level of judgement regarding the elements that should be included or excluded from this Monitoring Progress Report. This chapter has been constructed on the principle that information should be included unless

¹⁰ Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/nutrition/platform/platform_en.htm (accessed 23 June 2008).

there are good reasons for its exclusion. Information was excluded if one or more of the following conditions was fulfilled:

1. The monitoring form's specificity, clarity, focus or means of measurement was so poor that it was not possible to communicate the information in a meaningful way.
2. The information was not relevant to the commitment and its actions.
3. The information was not judged to be significant enough to merit inclusion.
4. The information did not concern actions taking place in 2007.

2.1.2 The objectivity and reliability of this chapter

RAND Europe compiled this chapter on the basis that all the information necessary to represent the progress of a commitment accurately was contained in the monitoring forms. Therefore, the only evidence we have used to create this chapter was provided by the monitoring forms we received or the responses to our queries to the authors of some of the forms.

The RAND Europe team endeavoured to treat each monitoring form in a wholly objective manner. Our intention was simply to communicate clearly the information a form contains, and therefore this chapter is very descriptive. We did not make any judgements about the relevance of a particular commitment to the Platform's aims. We did, however, refer to five criteria when making decisions about the order in which to present commitments and the extent of the information presented about each commitment:

- The impact of the action area on obesity (according to available research)
- The scale of commitment
- The potential scale of commitment (i.e. possibility for future development)
- The quality of the monitoring
- The commitment's achievements, according to available evaluations.

Given that we treated each form objectively, and used no other sources of information, this chapter's accounts of the Platform's commitments reflect how well Platform members reported on these commitments. For example, if a monitoring form offered much relevant, specific information in a cogent manner, then this chapter may treat it in more detail than a form that offered little appropriate data in a confusing format.

2.1.3 Categories and definitions

In order to give an informative overview of the Platform's commitments, this section has been organised into three main categories and nineteen sub-categories. The three main categories – the food environment, the eating environment and physical activity – were developed from the available research, particularly the obesity schema developed by the

UK Foresight programme.¹¹ The following table gives an overview of the categories and their definitions.

Category	Sub-category	Definition
The food environment	Product labelling	<i>Modifying food product labels and/or labelling policies (both label design and label information content).</i>
	Product reformulation	<i>Food producers altering the nutritional composition of food products – usually to modify levels of fat, sugar or salt.</i>
	Product range modification	<i>Food producers altering the range of food products they produce in order to contribute to the Platform's aims, whether by eliminating less healthy options or by introducing new, healthier options.</i>
	Portion size	<i>Altering the amount of a food product understood to be, or provided as, a "portion".</i>
	Advertising controls	<i>Proposing and/or implementing limits or codes of practice for advertising, often focused on curbing the advertising of high fat, sugar or salt foods to certain populations.</i>
The eating environment	Nutrition education	<i>Attempts to educate about nutritional values or healthy diets that require active participation or response from the target population, often involving person-to-person interactions.</i>
	Nutrition or healthy lifestyles information (off-label)	<i>Producing and/or distributing information about nutritional values or healthy lifestyles using mechanisms other than labelling.</i>
	Promoting health qualities of own products	<i>Highlighting the healthy aspects of food products or promoting food products that are claimed to have health benefits, when the promoter is also the producer of the particular products (or represents the product's producers in some way).</i>

¹¹ Government Office for Science (2007) Foresight: Tackling Obesities: Future Choices: Project Report.

	Point of purchase	<i>Changing food-purchasing patterns through mechanisms implemented at the point of purchase. These may include: altering the product range available at point of purchase and the pricing of items in that range.</i>
	Workplace-based initiatives	<i>Initiatives that are aimed at encouraging or mandating various aspects of a healthy diet and lifestyle, often through a holistic programme of activities, and which are based in workplaces.</i>
	Attempting to influence policy-makers	<i>Attempts to advance the aims of the Platform through directly engaging and influencing policy-makers.</i>
Physical activity	Non-sport participation	<i>Providing specific opportunities for non-sport physical activity.</i>
	Sport participation	<i>Providing specific opportunities for sport-based physical activity.</i>
	Facilitating access	<i>Initiatives that help to create conditions that enable people to take part in physical activity (usually sport-based) – for example, providing relevant equipment or subsidising sport fees; does not include physical activity information provision.</i>
	Physical activity information	<i>Producing and/or distributing information about physical activity.</i>
	Sponsorship	<i>The specific act of providing money to a team, organisation or event (usually in exchange for publicity) where the provider's involvement is solely financial.</i>
Research	Conducting research	<i>Conducting research to advance understanding of issues related to the aims of the Platform.</i>

	Supporting research	<i>Initiatives that support the undertaking of research into issues related to the aims of the Platform. For example: creating networks for the exchange of research findings and techniques; funding professional development in relevant research areas; providing funding for research.</i>
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Table 2.1: Categories and sub-categories of Platform activities

2.1.4 Summary and broader context

Each section detailing a different area of Platform activity is followed by a concise overview of the research that has taken place regarding the area of activity in question, a short summary of some of the main actions the Platform has undertaken in this area in 2007, and a few comments on how the monitoring of these actions might be improved. In some cases, there has either been very little research on a particular area or very little Platform activity around that area, and therefore the conclusion section has been omitted.

The research overviews have been included solely as an attempt to set the Platform's activities in a wider context. For reasons of space and practicality, the research summaries are not intended to be a comprehensive overview of the state of research and therefore they do not encompass every strand of research opinion. They do, however, make use of systematic reviews of topics wherever available and do not aim to privilege a particular perspective on a topic. Furthermore, neither the research summaries nor the comments on the monitoring of activities reflect the views of the European Commission.

2.1.5 Difficulties in measurement and attribution

Before we describe in detail the Platform commitments and outline relevant research undertaken in similar areas, a general note regarding the difficulty of conducting, measuring and evaluating outcomes of initiatives is required. Many of the research studies referred to document that their outcomes should be interpreted with care, as causality and overall attributable effects are difficult to establish. This stems from the inherent difficulty within research methodology to isolate cause and effect, something that is almost impossible outside a controlled environment (e.g. a laboratory). Thus, if studies fail to observe any effect from interventions, it does not directly imply that the intervention was without impact. Conversely, if effects are observed then care should be taken in attributing the cause, as many external factors could have influenced the outcomes.

A similar note relates to monitoring, in particular measuring the demonstrable and attributable outputs and outcomes of Platform commitments. As for research, the outcomes and impacts of commitments cannot all be known, nor can any observed outcomes always be fully attributed to the commitments undertaken. Thus, in observing outputs and outcomes, similar care should be taken when cause and effect are attributed.

2.2 The food environment

2.2.1 Product labelling

Modifying food product labels and/or labelling policies (both label design and label information content).

The **CIAA**'s voluntary Nutrition Labelling Scheme aims to provide nutrition information in a consistent manner for food and drink products marketed in the EU. The scheme includes front-of-pack and back-of-pack labelling, and is based on a uniform list of nutrients, nutrition information per serving and the introduction of Guideline Daily Amounts (GDAs). Initially seven companies (**Coca-Cola**, **Groupe Danone**, **Kellogg**, **Kraft Foods**, **Nestlé**, **PepsiCo** and **Unilever**) committed to implement the scheme in full, but this number has now risen to eleven with the recent addition of **Mars**, the **Campbell Soup Company**, **Cadbury Schweppes** and **Orangina** (740). The following paragraphs detail the actions carried out by individual **CIAA** members in support of the Nutrition Labelling Scheme.

As part of the **CIAA** action, **Unilever** has committed to providing GDAs for five nutrients on the back of pack and the GDA for energy on the front of pack. At the end of 2007, 35% of Unilever's food portfolio carried GDA labelling, with full implementation planned for 2009 (836). Unilever had also introduced a front-of-pack logo called "Choices / Eat Smart Drink Smart", which indicates products that meet certain health criteria, to 14 European countries by the end of 2007 (836). **Groupe Danone** is implementing the GDA labelling in all European countries where it is present; by the end of 2007, approximately 35% of eligible packs (which exclude very small packs, packs with more than three languages and packs with more than three varieties) displayed this information (781).

Kraft has developed guidelines and other internal initiatives to implement GDA labelling: it estimates that 18% of its product volume in 19 countries had front-of-pack labelling at the close of 2007, including 70% of its product volume in the UK (1003). **Mars** has implemented GDA labelling on 36% of its food sales, representing 9% of stock keeping units, in five countries; for its ice cream business, 15% of sales, representing 20% of stock keeping units in one country; and for its snack food business, 8% of sales, representing 2% of stock keeping units over 18 brands in 20 European countries (1015). By the end of December 2007, 76% of **PepsiCo**'s beverage products in 22 countries were GDA-labelled, as were 76% of its snack products in 18 countries. PepsiCo was part of the joint stakeholder initiative, which saw 17,000 food safety inspectors in Poland trained on the subject of GDAs (619). The **METRO Group** has committed to introduce the GDA scheme on all its own-brand products and has commenced roll-out of the scheme in Germany (735).

CIAA has been conducting a monitoring survey to assess the implementation of the Nutrition Labelling Scheme, although full results are not yet available. Preliminary results indicate that 54% of the 2,025 European companies surveyed say that they have recently introduced or are planning to introduce for their products nutritional labelling that gives GDA information for things like energy (calories), fat, carbohydrates, protein or other nutrients. In addition, 70% of respondents who say they will introduce GDA labelling expect to have it on 50% or more of their packaging, 65% of those who will have "Big

Eight” nutrients expect to have it on 50% or more of their packaging, and 72% of those who will have front-of-pack labelling expect to have it on 50% or more of their packaging. It is unclear whether these are firm commitments and what measure of packaging is being used (740).

The Union of European Beverages Associations (**UNESDA**) has become the first industry to adopt the **CIAA**’s scheme as an entire sector (the sector’s European market was 123,212 million litres in 2005). Roll-out of the scheme across its members commenced in 2007 and UNESDA claims that initial indications from company monitoring suggest that GDA labelling is widespread across the sector; these are, of course, initial indications. UNESDA has set the target of completing the roll-out by 2008 and will engage independent consultants to monitor compliance (582, 1027).

In 2007 UNESDA reported on the monitoring of its other labelling commitments (in addition to the **CIAA** GDA action). With regard to its commitment to provide nutrition information in a format noticeable to consumers, even when not legally required, an analysis of 3,555 products across seven European markets established that the “Big Four” elements (calories, protein, carbohydrate and fat) were shown on 85% of these products. With regard to UNESDA’s commitment to provide on-pack calorie information per 100 millilitres or per serving size on all products, of the 3,555 products analysed, 3,048 provided calorie information on their labels, an 85.7% compliance rate (582).

The European Modern Restaurants Association (**EMRA**) has overseen the continued roll-out of GDA product labelling amongst its members. **McDonald’s** restaurants provided 10 billion pieces of packaging carrying GDA information in 2007, reaching ten million consumers a day in Europe. EMRA reports that other members (**YUM! Brands, Burger King, Eat Out Group**) have introduced easily accessible nutritional information in restaurants through brochures, tray liners and posters, although figures were not provided and it is not clear if this information includes GDA guidelines (536).

2007 was the second year of use for the pan-European logo created by **Freshfel Europe** (the forum for the European fresh fruits and vegetables food chain) to promote the consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables. The logo aims to provide clarity to consumers who may be confused by the current variety of European logos promoting fruit and vegetable consumption. Apart from its use in displays in certain retail outlets in France, the monitoring does not specify additional applications for the logo in 2007. Freshfel indicates that the logo’s existence has been widely disseminated amongst a targeted audience of traders and other potential users, although it is not clear how this was accomplished. Freshfel points out that it does not have the capacity to promote the logo itself (use of the logo remains entirely determined by the industry), a fact that may have slowed down adoption of the logo so far (527).

The European Snack Association (**ESA**) has committed to further increase voluntary nutrition labelling on savoury snack packs across Europe, although it did not state any targets for 2007; the ESA is awaiting the results of a survey on progress (604). Also in the snack sector, in 2007 the Danish manufacturer **KiMs** (a member of **CIAA**) moved from including the “Big Four” nutrients on its labels to the “Big Eight”, and aims to achieve GDA labelling by the end of 2008 (618).

EuroCommerce encourages its members to implement nutrition labelling on own-brand products where there is none, and to increase the level of nutrition information on these products where it already exists. Each EuroCommerce member company reports to EuroCommerce every six months, giving percentages corresponding to the different types of nutrition information found on own-brand products. Results on progress were presented to the Platform in July 2007, although no further information was provided in the official monitoring form (794).

CIAA member **Cadbury Schweppes** has continued to implement the “Be Treatwise” labelling campaign in the UK, which consists of a front-of-pack logo that directs consumers to back-of-pack GDAs for individual nutrients (including calories, fat, salt and sugars) that are contained in each item. By 2007, more than 240 product lines (including major brands) carried elements of “Be Treatwise”, which equates to approximately one billion sales units. The logo also appears in Cadbury Schweppes’ television, press and poster advertising for its designated key brands (654). **Mars UK** has implemented the “Be Treatwise” message on over 60 stock keeping units in the UK, supported by complementary websites (1010).

Market research on the “Be Treatwise” initiative’s impact indicates that one third of respondents would use the Treatwise/GDA information to compare and contrast different confectionery items before purchase, although one third would not; in addition, the research indicates that such labelling is less likely to be used by consumers for chocolates and sweets than for other products. Compared to earlier market research, the number of respondents who understood the calorie component of the GDA labelling had increased from 28% to 43% and the proportion of respondents who use the GDA labelling to make choices when buying confectionery in the presence of children had increased from 23% to 30%. It is not clear, however, how many people were questioned and whether there was continuity of respondents between the two rounds of research (654).

Carrefour (a member of EuroCommerce) has committed to increase the number of its own-brand products that bear its own nutritional labelling system. By July 2007, 95% of its own-brand products in France bore such labelling, 6.7% in Italy and 14% in Spain (737). From September 2007, **EROSKI** (**Eurocoop** member for Spain) has introduced a new traffic-light labelling system for its 2,000 own-brand products. The system includes simplified nutrition information on the front of pack for five nutrients, including GDA levels, as well as full back-of-pack nutrient information. So far, 50 EROSKI products have been labelled and are sold in EROSKI’s 1,600 stores throughout Spain (1030).

Volvic reports that in 2007 it achieved its target of 100% product coverage for its new sugar scale on the packaging of its flavoured beverages. The sugar scale was supported by an “advertorial” campaign, targeted at women and parents, which had a reach of approximately 3.5 million people (780).

The UK Food Standards Agency’s (**FSA**) voluntary, front-of-pack “signposting” nutrition-labelling scheme is intended for use by retailers and manufacturers to give “at a glance” information on the fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt content of foods. One of the FSA’s aims for 2007 was to promote uptake of the scheme amongst manufacturers and other sectors of the food industry. Subsequent to FSA meetings with industry representatives, the scheme is being used by eight retailers, whose combined sales make up more than 40% of

the UK retail market, as well as sixteen manufacturers and four service providers. By the end of 2007 nearly 10,000 own-label retailer products and 100 manufacturer product lines carried traffic-light colour-coded signpost labelling. In addition, the Agency has gained the support of 23 professional bodies, major UK health charities and consumer organisations for the scheme. These organisations have carried out their own work to raise awareness amongst consumers and health professionals of traffic-light signpost labelling. The FSA also aimed to increase consumer awareness and understanding of the labelling scheme through a campaign that used television advertising, posters, and magazine and newspaper articles. In particular, the FSA printed 250,000 booklets for consumers.

Preliminary sales data from companies who have applied traffic-light front-of-pack labelling suggest that consumers are using it to make healthier choices of foods within categories, but are not avoiding categories where products display some red traffic lights. For example, the UK supermarket **Sainsbury's** compared sales of products within food categories over the 12-week periods before and after traffic-light labels were introduced and found that, overall, there was a 15% increase in sales of healthier products and a 12% decrease in sales of less healthy products. Sales data over 12 months from another UK retailer, **Waitrose**, show a significant increase in sales for “healthy” choices (more green traffic lights) and a decrease in sales for less healthy (more red) choices in sandwiches and ready meals since the introduction of traffic-light labels. It should be noted, of course, that consumption patterns may have been affected by many causes other than the introduction of the labelling scheme (159).

2.2.2 **Product labelling: Summary and broader context**

Evidence regarding the relationship between the use of product labels and changes in purchase patterns or diet is rather inconclusive.¹² Preliminary results from surveys in the United States of America seem to suggest that increased nutritional knowledge and label use are associated with healthier diets.¹³ Further research is needed, however, to establish a causal connection between label use and behaviour change, since there are many potential confounding factors.

In terms of label comprehension, it appears that consumers can retrieve simple information and make simple calculations and comparisons between products using numerical information, but their ability to interpret the nutrition label accurately reduces as the complexity of the task increases.¹⁴ An overview of European studies indicated that consumers had difficulty in understanding the roles played in their diet by different nutrients mentioned on labels. They also had difficulty in interpreting serving size information, converting information from grams per 100 grams to grams per serving, and understanding percentage energy figures.

¹² Grunert, K. and Wills, J. (2007) “A review of European research on consumer response to nutrition information on food labels” *Journal of Public Health*, 15, 385–399

¹³ Drichoutis, A., Lazaridis, P. and Nayga, R. (2006) “Consumers’ Use of Nutritional Labels: A Review of Research Studies and Issues”, *Academy of Marketing Science Review*, 9, 1–22; Hawkes, C. (2004a) *Nutrition labels and health claims: the global regulatory environment* Geneva: World Health Organisation

¹⁴ Grunert and Wills (2007); Cowburn, G., Stockley, L. (2005) “Consumer understanding and use of nutrition labelling: A systematic review”, *Public Health Nutrition* 8:1, 21–28.

The degree to which labels inform the purchasing decisions of European consumers is still unclear, partly because there is a limited amount of high-quality research on the topic. Self-reported levels of label reading by consumers are high, but more objective measures suggest that consumers may simply look at nutrition information panels and not process the information further.¹⁵

Several label characteristics have been found to be conducive to use and comprehension. Regarding the position of labels on packaging, studies have indicated that people use front-of-pack labels more than back-of-pack labels;¹⁶ however, there exists some evidence that, in combination with front-of-pack information, back-of-pack information can increase the credibility of products.¹⁷

The format in which labels provide information is also important. Consumers, who are often pressed for time, prefer simple labels that quickly and clearly convey the health status of a particular product. The only caveat to be made is that labels should not be too simple, as they could lose credibility. Simplified information such as health logos and traffic lights could require extra information in order to be used.

In terms of front-of-pack labelling, the use of colour coding to create traffic lights seems to be well liked by consumers, as colour coding can combine simplicity with a sufficient amount of information.¹⁸ However, GDA labels can convey more information in an understandable manner, avoiding the problem of oversimplification. A third hybrid form, the colour coding of GDA information, appears to be the most liked. This marries the simplicity of colour coding with the information content of GDAs.¹⁹

The main Platform labelling initiatives for 2007 have been around introducing front-of-pack GDA labelling for food and drink products. In particular, the **CIAA** Nutrition Labelling Scheme has involved some of the largest manufacturers and industry associations in Europe. In addition, the UK Food Standards Agency (**FSA**) has introduced a nutrition labelling scheme in the UK based on the traffic-light scheme. Given the large scale of these commitments, monitoring is extremely important, yet challenging. Given the size and complexity of the task, and the variety of actors involved, it is perhaps sensible and practical that these schemes are voluntary.

As with reformulation, it is very useful to receive both absolute and relative figures, as when the FSA states both the number of products carrying the label scheme and the share of the retail market these products cover. The introduction of labelling schemes such as these also offers the opportunity for high-quality research to assess their impacts on

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Feunekes, G., Gortemaker, I., Willems, A., Lion, R., van den Kommer, M. (2008) "Front-of-pack nutrition labelling: Testing effectiveness of different nutrition labelling formats front-of-pack in four European countries", *Appetite*, 50, 57–70.

¹⁷ Wansink B. (2003) "How do front and back labels influence beliefs about health claims?" *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 37:2, 305–16.

¹⁸ Grunert & Wills (2007); Food Standards Agency (2005) *Qualitative Signpost Labelling Refinement Research*.

¹⁹ Grunert, K., Wills, J. (2007).

consumer purchasing behaviour, and some evidence has already been generated from the UK.

2.2.3 Product reformulation

Food producers altering the nutritional composition of food products – usually to modify levels of fat, sugar or salt.

In 2007, the **Unilever** Nutrition Enhancement Programme evaluated the nutritional composition of all Unilever's products (retail and food service), which represented 12,921 European products. The programme has been running since 2004, and during 2007 Unilever removed 2,750 tonnes of saturated fat, 170 tonnes of salt and 5,000 tonnes of sugar from its products, to add to the previous years' achievements. Although the reformulation programme has included the reformulation and relaunch of major brands, the monitoring does not indicate what proportion of Unilever's overall fat, salt and sugar usage these figures represent. Most of the work for this project is carried out by Unilever's Nutrition and Health Centre, which currently employs approximately 150 people. Notably, a peer-reviewed scientific paper on Unilever's Nutrition Enhancement Programme methodology has been published in the *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition* (834).

In 2007, **PepsiCo** continued to reformulate its products and make reformulated products more widely available. Approximately 60% of its European markets now include reformulated products in their product range, up from 30% in 2006. In particular, PepsiCo has reduced the saturated fats and sodium content in snack products in its major markets: for example, in the Northern Europe and UK markets, the great majority of the company's snacks portfolio is produced in Sunseed oil, which contains 70% less saturated fat. It would aid understanding of these achievements if absolute figures on the reduction of fat and salt were provided (619).

Eight major retailers in the UK came together through the **British Retail Consortium** to eliminate all hydrogenated vegetable oils from their product lines in 2007. The eight retailers (**ASDA**, **The Co-operative**, **Boots**, **Iceland**, **Marks & Spencer**, **Sainsbury's**, **Tesco** and **Waitrose**) together account for 75% of food sales in the UK, and have reformulated 6,853 food units in total (799).

The European Snack Association (**ESA**) committed to offer an increased number of products reduced in fat, saturated fat and/or salt across Europe in 2007, although it did not set any specific targets (604).

Members of the European Modern Restaurants Association (**EMRA**) have undertaken activities to reformulate the food they offer. In January 2007, EMRA member **Goody's** restaurants fully implemented a scheme to stop adding salt to its potato products in all its 181 restaurants in Greece. Consumers are instead given the opportunity to add salt to potato products, if they wish, by using one-gram salt pouches. As a result, salt consumption in Goody's restaurants has been reduced by at least 40 tonnes per year and its standard-size French fries contain 1.8% of the GDA for sodium, down from 18.1%. In October 2007, **Quick Restaurants** introduced a similar programme in their 400 restaurants in France, Belgium and Luxembourg, reducing salt by 16 tonnes. Quick have also added 10 new recipes with balanced nutritional criteria, reducing fat in their sauces by

47% for 41% of burgers sold in France and Belgium, representing 16,328 tonnes. EMRA member **YUM! brand's** Kentucky Fried Chicken and Burger King restaurants have also stopped systematically adding salt to fries in the UK, resulting in 570 tonnes less salt being consumed. The **Eat Out Group** has reduced the salt content in its Pans & Company and Bocatta brands by a total of three tonnes per year by reducing the salt content in its bread by 5%, affecting 375 restaurants in Spain, Portugal and Italy (535). For many of these salt reduction commitments, it was not clear what proportion of the total salt used in the restaurants the various reductions represented – providing this information would aid understanding of the impact of commitments.

The **Casino Group**, a member of EuroCommerce operating in France, undertook extensive reformulation of its products in 2007: 50 products have been reformulated to reduce sugar content, resulting in a reduction of 140 tonnes of sugar; for salt, 45 products have been reformulated, effecting a reduction in salt of 23 tonnes; and 37 products have had their fat content reformulated, resulting in a decline of 173 tonnes. This was partly organised through a nutrition forum with Groupe Casino's suppliers (725).

EROSKI (the EuroCoop member for Spain) has set a target to reformulate 144 of its own-brand products by 2009 to improve their nutritional profile and eliminate the use of hydrogenated vegetable oils; if the targeted products cannot be made healthier, EROSKI will remove them from its range. EROSKI did not state the extent to which the products would become "healthier". In 2007, EROSKI reformulated 26 of the 144 products to remove hydrogenated fat, although these products did not go on sale during 2007 because their packaging was being modified for the new EROSKI labelling system (1031).

The UK Food Standards Agency (**FSA**) is working with the UK's government and stakeholders to reduce the average adult population intake of salt to 6.0 grams per day (from the current 9.5 grams per day) by 2010. With this aim in mind, in 2007 the FSA consulted on and published a self-reporting framework for the food industry to use to report on progress towards meeting the FSA's salt target. By the end of 2007, 23 responses to the self-reporting framework had been received from organisations across all sectors of the food industry. 2007 also saw the publication of the FSA's urinary analysis survey, which showed that the average daily salt intake for the UK population had fallen by 0.5 grams to 9.0 grams (158).

As part of this salt reduction commitment, in 2007 the FSA worked with the **British Meat Processors Association** to publish guidance that increases awareness amongst small and medium-sized businesses of the public health initiative on salt reduction and promotes action on reformulation activity to reduce salt content in products. In particular, the guidance provides practical advice on how salt reduction may be achieved in the manufacturing of meat products. The guidance was published online in June 2007 and has attracted 9,203 hits (777).

CIAA member **Mars** has committed to reduce the salt levels of its rice, cooking sauces and soup products across all European markets in accordance with the targets for 2010 set by the UK Food Standards Agency. In 2007, this involved research and development focusing on recipe changes and subsequent taste effects for 90 products (1016).

2.2.4 Product reformulation: Summary and broader context

Reformulation of food products involves altering their nutritional composition. In the context of the Platform's work, it is likely that the main focus of reformulation activities is to make foods healthier, most often by modifying levels of sodium, sugar or fat.

A high intake of sodium can result in increased blood pressure and an increased risk of coronary heart disease and stroke.²⁰ Within Western countries, processed foods currently account for approximately 65–80% of total sodium intake.²¹ Reducing the sodium content of processed foods could therefore potentially contribute to increased health, and indeed most of the Platform members' reformulation activities focus on processed foods. Figures provided to the Platform suggest that members have removed at least 822 tonnes of salt from food products since 2004. This is complemented by some evidence that the average daily salt intake for the UK fell slightly in 2007.

The possible relationship between sugar and obesity has mainly been investigated in relation to sweetened beverages. Increased consumption of soft drinks and sweetened beverages has been associated with increased body weight and obesity.²² It appears that most of the activities in the beverage industry have been focused on modifying the product range in order to provide an increased proportion of low-calorie drinks, rather than modifying sugar levels in certain brands. The effects of replacing sugar with artificial sweeteners in order to lose weight are unclear, however. Several short-term studies indicate a reduced energy intake after sugar replacement, yet long-term studies are scarce and inconclusive about the effects of sugar reformulation.²³ Nevertheless, figures suggest that Platform members have removed 5,140 tonnes of sugar from their products since 2004, the great majority from Unilever products.

The World Health Organisation has stated that there exists “convincing evidence” that a high intake of energy-dense foods is linked to an increased risk of obesity.²⁴ Energy-dense foods are closely related to foods with a high fat and low water content.²⁵ Reformulation aimed at the reduction of fat and energy density could therefore be significant in addressing obesity.²⁶ In terms of the relative impacts of sugar and fat reduction, the weight

²⁰ Khaw, K.T., Bingham, S., Welch, A., *et al.* (2004) “Blood pressure and urinary sodium in men and women: the Norfolk Cohort of the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer (EPIC–Norfolk)”, *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 80:1, 397–403.

²¹ Chisholm, A. and Mann, J. (2006) “Reducing salt intake: action beyond the label”, *Journal of the New Zealand Medical Association*, 19:1232.

²² Malik, V., Schulze, M., Hu, F. (2006) “Intake of sugar-sweetened beverages and weight gain: a systematic review”, *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 84:274–88; Benton (2005) “Can artificial sweeteners help control body weight and prevent obesity?”, *Nutrition Research Reviews*, 18:63–76.

²³ Vermunt, S., Pasman, W., Schaafsma, G., Kardinaal, A. (2003) “Effects of sugar intake on body weight: a review”, *Obesity Reviews*, 4:91–99.

²⁴ World Health Organisation (2003) “Diet, Nutrition and the Prevention of Chronic Diseases”, WHO Technical Report no. 916 Report of Joint WHO/FAO Expert Consultation Geneva: WHO.

²⁵ Drewnowski, A. (1998) “Energy density, palatability and satiety: implications for weight control”, *Nutrition Reviews*, 55:31–43.

²⁶ Benton, D. (2005).

of evidence appears to be that reducing sugar levels would not be expected to have such a dramatic effect on weight gain as decreasing fat intake.²⁷ The available information indicates that Platform members have reduced fat in products by 19,251 tonnes since 2004. In addition, several Platform commitments reformulate products to reduce or remove the presence of hydrogenated fats, which have been associated with increased risk of developing cardiovascular disease.²⁸

A final point is that reducing the energy density of foods using reformulation does not seem to affect satiety, as long as people perceive the amount and volume of food to be similar.²⁹ This suggests that there is wide scope for products to be made less energy dense without affecting consumers' perceived satiety.

When monitoring the Platform's achievements in this area, it is naturally very important for quantitative data on reformulation actions to be provided. Ideally, these figures should state reductions both in relative and absolute levels, if possible – for example, stating that a product's salt level has been reduced by 15%, and that this represents a reduction of 15,000 tonnes a year (which, in turn, is 5% of the producer's total salt usage). In addition, if specific figures for each year could be provided this would make it easier to gain an overview of the scale of Platform members' achievements in the preceding year. However, obtaining these data can present a considerable logistical and information challenge for food producers.

2.2.5 Product range modification

Food producers altering the range of food products they produce in order to contribute to the Platform's aims, whether by eliminating less healthy options or by introducing new, healthier options.

EMRA members have committed to ensuring that options for consumers who are seeking to achieve a balanced diet are always available in their members' restaurants, and that these options are highlighted. No targets, however, have been set for implementation. **The Eat Out Group** has introduced salad as an alternative to French fries in all its Pans & Company sandwich outlets (175 in Spain) (537).

The Union of European Beverages Associations (**UNESDA**) has committed to increase the number of new beverages with low- or no-calorie content and light versions of existing beverages, where technologically possible, safe and acceptable to consumers. In 2007, UNESDA presented monitoring data from evaluators that indicated that 40% of the low- or no-calorie products on the market in 2005 had been introduced since 2000, although the trend in the overall size of this market was not indicated. The monitoring also suggests that the average number of calories per 100 millilitres of drink had declined slightly from 36 to 34 between 2000 and 2005, although it is not clear if this result is statistically significant (583). At a company level, No Sugar carbonated soft drinks make up 22% of

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ Lichtenstein, A. (2003) "Influence of hydrogenated fat and butter on CVD risk factors", *Atherosclerosis* 171:1, 97–107.

²⁹ Bell, E., Rolls, B. (2001) "Energy density of foods affects energy intake in normal-weight women", *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 73:1010–1018.

PepsiCo's sales, compared to the industry average of 14%, and it only markets No Sugar carbonated soft drinks in Western Europe (619).

Finally, KiMs (a **CIAA** member based in Denmark) has introduced a new low-fat range of products that contains a maximum of 5% fat, with another range scheduled for introduction in 2008 (618).

2.2.6 **Product range modification: Summary and broader context**

There has been little research on the effects of product range modification, since research tends to focus on the point where consumers make choices (the point of purchase), rather than on changes at the producer level. When research does focus on products, it tends to concern issues such as labelling, reformulation, and so on.

With regard to the Platform's 2007 commitments, the main areas of activity were found in the restaurant and beverage sectors, which appeared to increase the availability of healthy food options and low-calorie drinks, respectively.

Appropriate monitoring is particularly important for product range modification initiatives, since introducing healthier options only has an effect on consumers' health if these options are selected. It is therefore important to be able to provide figures on the uptake of options (with reference to a baseline state) as well as on their availability. Currently, these types of figures are not provided in members' monitoring.

2.2.7 **Portion size**

Altering the amount of a food product understood to be, or provided as, a "portion".

UNESDA has committed to increase the choice and availability of individual packaging sizes and to pursue, where appropriate, cup downsizing to help reduce individual over-consumption. The indicator selected to measure this commitment has been the increase in the number of individual packaging sizes on the market. In 2007, monitoring by evaluators was presented that indicates that the number of types of pack (stock keeping units) in the European market has increased by 20% from 2001 to 2006, suggesting that there is a greater choice of packaging sizes. There is no indication of the sizes of these new pack types (583).

2.2.8 **Portion size: Summary and broader context**

The size of food portions, whether package size or restaurant servings, has steadily increased over the last decades.³⁰ It has further been observed that large package sizes can increase the consumption of food products.³¹ Several studies have underlined the human tendency to consume more when package and portion sizes are large, particularly in the

³⁰ Young, L., Nestlé, M. (2002) "The Contribution of Expanding Portion Sizes to the US Obesity Epidemic", *American Journal of Public Health*, 92:2, 246–249; Matthiessen, J., Fagt, S., Biloft-Jensen, A., Beck, A-M., Ovesen, L. (2003) "Size makes a difference", *Public Health Nutrition*, 6:1, 65–72.

³¹ Wansink, B. (1996) "Can Package Size Accelerate Usage Volume?", *Journal of Marketing*, 60:3, 1–14; Wansink, B. (2004) "Environmental Factors That Increase the Food Intake and Consumption Volume of Unknowing Consumers", *Annual Review of Nutrition*, 24, 455–479.

case of food.³² Furthermore, the volume of food consumed serves as a better indicator of satiety than energy intake.³³ Thus, portion and package size appears to be an important factor influencing the amount of food consumed.

Several options are available to limit the portions provided and to introduce artificial stopping points that could limit total consumption. Firstly, portion sizes can simply be reduced in order to prevent overeating. This strategy may, however, meet with objections from both consumers and producers. Thus, alternatives have been proposed, such as the introduction of smaller-sized products along the existing range, as well as limiting their energy density.³⁴ Secondly, introducing artificial stopping points within existing products has been shown to limit the total amount consumed. Stopping points can be created by subdividing large packages into smaller sub-packages, or by introducing internal sleeves. Clearly indicating individual servings can further serve as a stopping point.³⁵

Looking at 2007 Platform achievements, it appears there are relatively few actions aimed at modifying the portion sizes of existing products. In terms of monitoring, a particular challenge is quantifying any changes to portion sizes in ways that are meaningful and comparable across product categories. It may be easier to represent changes to portion size if the overall size of the product is reduced, rather than when the product contains multiple portions.

2.2.9 Advertising controls

Proposing and/or implementing limits or codes of practice for advertising, often focused on curbing the advertising of HFSS foods to certain populations.

The Union of European Beverages Associations (**UNESDA**) has committed to take action on its members' advertising and commercial communications, and 2007 saw the release of results on its progress. The first part of the commitment is a pledge to refrain from advertising in printed media, on websites or during broadcast programmes (TV and radio) where more than 50% of the audience is under 12 years old. This policy was monitored across eight markets in the fourth quarter of 2006 (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the UK) by a two-week survey that examined advertising on television, in printed media and on internet sites. The survey was conducted by a third-party evaluator. Of the 2,409 soft drinks advertisements on television in the two-week period, 975 were produced by the UNESDA signatory companies; 487 of the total advertisements appeared to be potentially non-compliant (it is not stated how many of these were from signatory companies and it is not stated how the advertisements were judged to be potentially non-compliant). For potentially non-compliant advertising spots, audience demographics obtained from Mediametrie/Eurodata showed that only two spots

³² Rolls, B. (2003) "The Supersizing of America: Portion Size and the Obesity Epidemic", *Nutrition and Behavior*, 38:2, 42–53.

³³ Rolls, B., Morris, E., Roe, L. (2002) "Portion Size of Food Affects Energy Intake in Normal-weight and Overweight Men and Women", *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 76, 1207–1213.

³⁴ Rolls (2003); Wansink, B. and Huckabee, M. (2005) "De-Marketing Obesity", *California Management Review*, 47:4, 1–13.

³⁵ Wansink and Huckabee (2005); Wansink (2004)

(0.21% of the signatories' advertising spots) appeared next to programmes with a child audience above 50%. For print media, only two advertising insertions of a total of 710 were judged by the monitoring team to have a readership where under-12s constituted more than half of readers. Online, of 14,901 soft drinks advertising insertions, 8,416 were from the signatory companies and all were judged by the monitoring team to be compliant. It thus appears that there is high compliance with the UNESDA commitment amongst signatories, although it is not clear what criteria were used to make some of the judgements of the monitoring teams (581).

The World Federation of Advertisers (**WFA**) and the European Advertising Standards Alliance (**EASA**) have continued their work to establish effective advertising codes of conduct, supported by functional Self-Regulatory Organisations (SROs), throughout Europe. The expansion of the EU to 27 members had meant that SROs did not exist in seven Member States. For 2007, the WFA and EASA set the target of establishing advertising codes and infrastructure for SROs in three of these seven Member States. This required a campaign to distribute information and raise awareness, and a training programme that included a twinning programme to pair a fledgling SRO with an established SRO partner, in order to provide support, experience and best practice: Poland and Lithuania are twinned with the UK, while Estonia is twinned with Ireland. As a result of these and other efforts, advertising codes and fully operational SROs have been put in place in Lithuania, Poland and Romania, thus meeting the target for 2007 (538).

There have been several initiatives to improve the performance of the existing and newly established SROs. For example, the EASA has ensured that decisions of SROs are published, in accord with its Best Practice Guide on the Publication of Advertising SRO Decisions, in 19 fully operational SROs across Europe (540). Similarly, EASA has also ensured that SROs in 18 Member States offer copy advice facilities, which help advertisers meet the standards they are set – up from 17 in 2006. There are still markets without this copy service because the SRO there has recently become operational or because the industry has placed priority on developing another service – for example, monitoring (539).

Given the concerns surrounding food advertising, EASA considered stakeholder involvement in code drafting and on adjudication panels to be of particular importance – not least to engender wider stakeholder acceptance of the food and beverage advertising codes of conduct. With this in mind, EASA established a set of principles for consultation of stakeholders. During 2007, three more SROs introduced broad code consultation when reviewing their codes (Cyprus, Poland and Slovakia). This means that 11 Member States conduct broad code consultation (41% of the EU-27). Because of differences in the wording of targets and definitions, it is not clear how this level compares with 2006. Also during 2007, SROs in four Member States introduced non-industry, independent members to their Jury/Complaints Committee (Austria, Finland, Lithuania and Poland), which means 14 Member States have an independent element on their Complaints Committees. In 2006, 15 Member States had included a means for stakeholder involvement in complaint adjudications as part of the national self-regulatory process. This may suggest that the level of stakeholder involvement declined in 2007. However, it appears that these stakeholders were not required to be “independent” in 2006 (whereas they were in 2007) thus making the commitment substantively different (541).

As part of this scheme to gain acceptance and awareness of SROs, WFA and EASA have been supporting and encouraging SROs to carry out awareness-raising initiatives. Part of this commitment has been the creation of a Best Practice Recommendation on SRO Communications and Awareness, which aims to: make consumers aware of the SRO and how to make a complaint; help the advertising industry to understand the requirement of the code and to comply with it; help policy-makers and civil society to understand self-regulation and how the SRO operates; and make all stakeholders aware of SRO decisions on complaints. As a result, three new campaigns to raise consumer and industry awareness of self-regulation and the national SRO were run in Lithuania, Hungary and Spain and nine other (unspecified) Member States conducted significant awareness-raising activities. When added to the ongoing awareness-raising campaigns in eight other Member States, it appears that WFA and EASA met their target for awareness campaigns to have run in 20 Member States by the end of 2007 (542).

During 2007, the **WFA** and **EASA** committed to urging SROs to complete implementation of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)'s Framework for Responsible Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverage Communications, and set a target for its adoption in 20 (74%) of Member States. To do so, WFA and EASA developed a User's Guide to facilitate a coherent interpretation of the framework across Member States, and conducted workshops on the framework during "Self Regulatory Roadshows" that involved business and parliamentary delegations and ministerial representatives. During 2007, SROs in seven Member States revised their codes of conduct to include the provisions of the ICC Framework (or introduced new codes that include these provisions): Belgium, the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovenia. This appears to be significantly below the target set for 2007 (543, 544).

EASA has committed to conducting a monitoring exercise across eight Member States that measures the national compliance rates of television, press and internet advertisements for food and beverages with the ICC Framework for Responsible Food and Beverage Communications and national self-regulatory code provisions on food and beverage advertising. However, it is not clear when this study will be completed or what resources it has been allocated (540).

In 2007, three members of **CIAA** altered their position on marketing directed at children. By April 2007, **Unilever** had amended its Global Principles for Food and Beverage Marketing to restrict all paid marketing communication primarily directed at children younger than six years of age, and to only market products that have a positive nutritional profile (qualifying for the "Choices / Eat-Smart Drink-Smart" programme) to children aged six to eleven years old. Unilever's monitoring did not specify what it means to "primarily direct" marketing at children younger than six years of age. An audit of Unilever's marketing indicated that the proportion of the \$1.9 billion spent on marketing and advertising in Europe that went on children under six years of age was 0%, and on those aged six to eleven years was 0.5%. It would be useful to be able to compare these figures with those from before the commencement of this commitment so that the extent of the changes made could be assessed (833).

Mars has also revised its global Marketing Code and communicated these revisions internally, ready for implementation in early 2008. The Code's aim is to ensure that Mars

will stop all advertising activities targeted at children below 12 years of age. In practice this means that Mars will not sponsor or otherwise link its marketing communications to films or media programmes where the intended audience is primarily under the age of 12; for television, this means programmes where more than 25% of the audience is under the age of 12 (1018). **KiMs** (a member of **CIAA** based in Denmark) states that it does not target advertising towards children and does not advertise in programme airtime aimed at children, although it provides limited details on this policy (618).

With regard to advertising controls introduced by national associations, **FEVIA** (the national food and drink industry federation in Belgium) and the Union of Belgian Advertisers (**UBA**) have compiled a Belgian self-regulatory advertising code, based on the **CIAA**'s international code. The Belgian code is monitored by the Jury for Ethical Practice in Advertising (JEP) and the UBA, and is evaluated by a working group of the **Belgian Ministry of Public Health**. In 2007, 74.5% of the analysed adverts (including copy advice before publication) were in accordance with the code; in 25.5% of the cases a recommendation was issued by the JEP. In all cases, the advertisers adapted the advertising in accordance with the recommendation (265). Finally, the **Danish Chamber of Commerce** has developed a voluntary codex in partnership with the Danish food industry that prohibits marketing of unhealthy foods in media directed towards children. The codex was published in January 2008, although no details on this codex were provided in the monitoring form (727).

2.2.10 Advertising controls: Summary and broader context

Most research regarding advertising focuses on the issue of advertising to children and largely relates to television advertising. Many countries have already adopted regulation that limits or prohibits advertising aimed at young children.³⁶ The main area of uncertainty raised by research into advertising controls is in deciding when self-regulation is sufficient and when national governments need to act. The benefits of self-regulation that are often cited are the low costs involved and the flexibility and speed with which regulation can be introduced.³⁷ However, it is also argued that self-regulation is not sufficient and state regulation will be necessary in those areas that are of concern to public health but are not in industry's best interest to address.³⁸ In this respect, one strand of opinion has indicated that the EU may have a potentially important role regarding the introduction of regulation, owing to its wide geographical scope and international reach.³⁹

With respect to individual countries, the case of Sweden is often used by advocates as well as opponents of self-regulation, as Sweden has introduced a complete ban on advertising to children. Advocates of self-regulation note that even statutory regulation this stringent is

³⁶ Caraher M., Landon J., Dalmeny K. (2006) "Television advertising and children: lessons from policy development", *Public Health Nutrition*, 9:5, 596–605.

³⁷ Hawkes C. (2005) "Self-regulation of food advertising: what it can, could and cannot do to discourage unhealthy eating habits among children", *Nutrition Bulletin*, 30, 374–382.

³⁸ Hawkes, C. (2005).

³⁹ Garde, A. (2008) "Food Advertising and Obesity Prevention: What Role for the European Union?", *Journal of Consumer Policy*, 31, 25–44.

not watertight, whereas advocates of statutory regulation note the significant decrease in advertising aimed at children.⁴⁰ Furthermore, attention is increasingly being drawn to advertising outside television via new media. Some see product placing in movies and video games (as well as other online advertising) as becoming increasingly important, but this issue has not been widely addressed in research literature.⁴¹

Given this context, it is perhaps unsurprising that a major part of the Platform activities in advertising relate to self-regulation. The **WFA** and **EASA** have continued their work to establish effective advertising codes and Self-Regulatory Organisations in Member States by developing training programmes, publication mechanisms, stakeholder involvement, awareness-raising initiatives and supporting adoption of the ICC Framework. These European-wide activities have been complemented by self-regulatory actions in Belgium and Denmark.

2.3 The eating environment

2.3.1 Nutrition education

Attempts to educate about nutritional values or healthy diets by means of active participation or response from the target population, often involving person-to-person interactions.

The Shape Up project is taking place in a network of cities and schools throughout Europe and is being co-ordinated by **P.A.U. Education** (based in Spain) and the **Danish University of Education**. The second year of the programme, running between September 2007 and June 2008, involves schools in 22 cities. As of Summer 2007, 1,642 students were registered on the Shape Up website portal, as well as 107 teachers. Shape Up aims to bring together the principles of health education, prevention and promotion in an integrated programme, based on sound research. Shape Up has a budget of €3 million and is supported by the European Commission's Public Health Programme. So far, **Kraft** has committed to contribute €600,000 to Shape Up over the three years, provide nutritional science expertise, and support the project at a local level through employee involvement (1002). The programme aims to involve schools and local communities in constructive dialogue and action planning concerning health education and promotion. Schools are encouraged to initiate health promotion activities at the local level, in collaboration with local stakeholders. In each participating city, a Shape Up promoting group co-ordinates the local activities taking place within the framework of Shape Up. Shape Up co-funds with city councils the recruitment of two dedicated staff members in each city. These staff members are responsible for training local community partners and monitoring the project at city level over its three-year duration.

The Shape Up programme aims to enhance children's competences in initiating and carrying out health promotion activities. Shape Up uses an "IVAC" methodology

⁴⁰ Caraher, M., Landon, J., Dalmeny, K. (2006); Schmitt 2007.

⁴¹ Hawkes, C. (2004b) *Marketing Food to Children: the Global Regulatory Environment*, Geneva: World Health Organisation; Linn, S. and Novosat, C. (2008) "Calories for Sale: Food Marketing to Children in the Twenty-First Century", *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 615, 133–155.

(developed by the Danish University of Education) that aims to help teachers and adults enable young people to deal with health matters in competent, democratic and efficient ways. The Shape Up programme will evaluate its outcomes, including changes at the school, family and community level, through active involvement of all the participating actors (children, parents, teachers and other community members), who will make measurements of Body Mass Index and other simple health status indicators (1002, 591).

The **EPODE** programme has been running in France since 2004 and now involves 127 French cities (over one million people). Based on EPODE's experience in France, in 2007 the programme was launched in Belgium under the name of **VIASANO** and in Spain with the name **THAO Salud Infantil**. VIASANO is a four-year project and involves approximately 123,000 people in two pilot cities; it is financed by the **Unilever Health Institute**, **la Fondation Internationale Carrefour**, and **Ferrero**. THAO Salud Infantil involves approximately 154,000 people (including 10,000 schoolchildren) in five pilot cities; it is financed by **Nestlé** and **la Fondation Internationale Carrefour** (1025).

EPODE aims to curb the progression of childhood obesity by implementing a sustainable culture of educating children and families on their lifestyles, and providing them with the means to adopt a less obesogenic lifestyle. EPODE proposes a prevention plan that is founded on the community acting together, which requires motivation and buy-in from local actors such as teachers, health professionals, sports instructors and shopkeepers. The implementation of EPODE is founded on the sustainable involvement of local stakeholders; the political support of elected officials; the involvement of scientists; partnerships with the private sector; and the expertise of a social marketing agency.

These goals need to be supported by multidisciplinary networks, and 2007 saw the development of governing principles and committees for the EPODE European Network (**EEN**). The EEN, supported by Ferrero, aims to extend the projects to other European countries and to provide a more formal structure for sharing best practices and ideas on assessment methodologies. Two articles regarding the EPODE programme and the EEN were published in the *British Medical Journal* in December 2007 (591, 1001, 1013, 658). The EEN is supported by the **Public Health Programme of the European Commission**. As of 2007, both **Ferrero** and **Mars** are supporting the EEN and have committed to contribute €525,000 each to the project between July 2007 and December 2010, as well as participating in meetings of the EPODE partners (1013). **Nestlé** has had a sustained involvement with EPODE: Nestlé France contributes €250,000 annually to EPODE and has committed 3.5 million Swiss francs to the EEN for the period July 2007 to December 2010 (658).

The Irish “Food Dudes” programme (managed by **Bord Bia**, the Irish Food Agency), which targets schoolchildren to increase their consumption of fruit and vegetables, entered its second full year in 2007. The programme aims to achieve this goal by giving children free fruit and vegetables at school for 16 days, showing them peer modelling videos, and rewarding children who taste and eat what is given to them. The aim is that the participants thereby develop a liking for the fruit and vegetables. After the 16-day “intervention” period there is a follow-up with materials for use in the home, the aim of which is to broaden the project's impact. Bord Bia indicates that follow-up research conducted one year and more after the intervention has found a sustained, significant

improvement in consumption levels. It is claimed that the programme is most effective at bringing about diet change amongst children who live in deprived areas and have a poor diet.

The programme was planned to run from September 2005 to June 2008, and aimed to involve 30,000 pupils in 150 schools during that period (representing 5% of all primary schools in Ireland). For the school year 2006/7, the target was to involve 50 schools and 7,756 children; in the event, the programme involved 52 schools and 11,817 participants. As in 2006, the programme was evaluated by the **Geary Institute for the Strategy of Social Change** and **University College, Dublin**, on the basis of questionnaires circulated to parents and teachers in participating schools. Over the two years, 75 schools were evaluated, generating responses from 494 teachers and 8,559 parents. The main findings for 2007 (which are very similar to those for 2006) were: 93% of teachers reported that parents were putting more fruit into their children's lunchboxes after the programme, and 99% believed that the health of children in Ireland would benefit from the introduction of the programme in all primary schools. Furthermore, 94% of parents stated that children were eating more fruit and vegetables at home because of the programme and 88% reported eating more fruit and vegetables themselves as a result of the programme.

As a consequence of the programme's success, the **Irish Government** decided in 2007 to fund the roll-out of the Food Dudes programme to all primary schools in Ireland over a five to six-year period. This commenced in April 2007 with 72 schools participating, followed by a further 231 schools in October and November 2007. This national roll-out has superseded the EU-funded programme in Ireland and consequently Year 3 of the EU programme has been cancelled. The organisers of the programme state that the EU's support of the programme was instrumental in ensuring that the national roll-out received financial backing from the Irish Government (528).

"Media Smart" is an industry-funded, not-for-profit media literacy programme that is targeted at primary-school children (aged 6 to 11 years). It aims to teach children to think critically about advertising through in-school teaching materials and television "infomercials". The programme uses interactive lessons to analyse real-life examples of advertising, including advertising for food and drink products that is aimed at children. In 2007, Media Smart was launched in Hungary and Poland, adding to existing operations in Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Finland, Sweden and the UK. This has raised the number of European primary schools that have requested Media Smart materials to 25,544, which represents 37% of schools in markets in which the programme operates (up from 27% in 2006). Media Smart reached the highest proportion of total primary schools in Finland, the Netherlands and Germany (100%, 49% and 45%, respectively) and the lowest proportion in Belgium and Sweden (4.5% and 1% of schools, respectively). Media Smart materials are available free of charge on request and are being promoted to 74,600 European primary schools across the eight Member States. The teaching materials are reviewed by "expert groups" of academics, government officials and teachers. The effectiveness of Media Smart has been evaluated by the **Institute of Education** in London, but the results of this evaluation were not included in the monitoring report (427, 545).

The **Food Standards Agency** has published its Food Competences Framework, which sets out the essential food skills and knowledge that young people need in order to make

healthier lifestyle choices. This Framework aims to create a flexible approach to enable teachers to develop activities to help young people acquire these skills and knowledge. The publication of the framework was preceded by a three-month UK public consultation on the draft framework and an accompanying regulatory impact assessment. The FSA now plans to embed the food competences in practice (759). As part of supporting these food competences, the FSA supports 92 out-of-school-hours “What’s Cooking?” clubs in the North-East of England. These clubs provide young people with practical opportunities to cook, handle and learn about food and thereby develop the skills and knowledge to make healthier diet choices. An independent evaluation of the scheme will be published in Spring 2008 and the lessons from this will be applied to the forthcoming expansion of What’s Cooking? to the East Midlands region of the UK (760).

Autumn 2007 saw the launch of a framework document for school governors developed by the **FSA** and the **National Governors Association**. The aims of this framework document are: to take governors, step by step, through actions they can take to develop a food policy; to inform governors about the minimum standards for school food and their responsibilities towards the standards; to help governors explore individual policy areas such as breakfast clubs; and to ensure that governors have up-to-date information about the main organisations involved in school policies and activities. The framework has been published and distributed throughout England, and a research company has been commissioned to conduct an independent evaluation of the framework document and its usefulness to governors (761).

By 2007, **Nestlé Hungary**’s nutrition education programme “Nutrikid” involved 130,000 children in 2,200 elementary schools (61% of such schools in Hungary). The programme is aimed at 10–12-year-olds and aims to transfer nutrition information (free of all advertising) in easily digestible formats: workbooks, teachers’ handbooks, videotapes of an education cartoon, and an accompanying website. Figures for 2007 alone were not provided, but 130,000 children’s workbooks and 6,000 teachers’ books have been produced since the programme’s launch in 2003 (442). Nestlé contributes 39% of the budget of Nutrikid Switzerland, which in 2007 sold 250 kits aimed at 10–12-year-olds and 350 of the newly developed kits aimed at 5–7-year-olds; 50% of these kits went to private families, 30% to schools and 20% to nutrition specialists (448).

Kraft Foods has increased the scale of its “Health4Schools” programme, which runs in selected schools in Gloucestershire, UK, and aims to educate children on growing and learning about food, developing cooking skills, the importance of eating breakfast, and encouraging active play. In September 2007, the number of participating schools rose to 100, each of which is provided with a cash award of £3,500. In a survey of 24 participating schools, 89% of schools reported that pupils’ awareness of healthy living had improved, 88% of schools claimed to have increased cookery activities for pupils, and 78% of schools indicated that they had increased the range of active play equipment available to pupils (457).

2007 saw the second phase of **Mars UK**’s “Body Smart” programme, a project that aims to encourage healthy eating and physical activity amongst the pupils of two schools in the Slough area of the UK. Initiatives include a breakfast activity club, after-school physical activity classes for parents and pupils, cookery lessons and a fruit scheme, although

quantitative data for these activities were not provided. Notably, the scheme made measurements of participants' Body Mass Index (BMI) before, during and after the activities; early indications from a comparison of this monitoring data against the baseline indicate that there have been improvements in the BMI of participants (1008).

The education programme "Breakfast with Cereals!" has been initiated by **Nestlé Romania** and the **Romanian Society for Paediatrics**. The programme aims to educate fourth grade children regarding the nutritional benefits of breakfast cereals and the importance of a daily breakfast for healthy development and better performance in school. The programme involves an educational stage, based on information booklets for children, educational games and resources for teachers, and a contest stage, where children compete to create a poster promoting breakfast cereals to their friends. In 2007, the programme involved 31,948 pupils and 1,493 teachers across 520 schools in 31 Romanian cities (445).

Nestlé continued to support the educational programme "Apetece-me" in Portuguese schools during 2007 through responding to schools' requests for programme materials, although no new activities were implemented. The programme consists of a set of tools aimed to guide teachers in constructing projects to promote healthy lifestyles, developed in co-operation with the **Portuguese Ministry of Education** and validated by the **Portuguese Society of Nutrition and Food Science**. The programme had a target of increasing the number of children and teachers participating in 2007, but there is no evidence of whether this has been achieved (438). **Nestlé Spain** has developed a programme to educate students, teachers and parents in basic nutrition and physical activity. The programme will provide books for students and teachers and will include a competition to design a poster on the importance of a healthy diet. Nestlé Spain claims that the programme will be launched to 10,000 Spanish students in 250 schools during the 2007–8 school year, although it is not clear if this had been accomplished at the time of reporting (1023).

A final educational programme taking place in schools is **Danone's** "Bon Appétit la Santé", an educational game aimed at promoting a healthy diet amongst children aged 5 to 6 years, which has a wide uptake amongst Belgian schools. 2007 saw updates for the game supplied to teachers (774).

Moving away from initiatives focused on children, the **Nestlé** Nutrition Studio provides consumers in Germany with personalised advice and information services for a healthy and balanced nutrition and lifestyle. The studio includes: a mobile point-of-purchase unit, staffed by nutritionists, that tours retail locations to give consumers individual consultations on diet and lifestyle; and a telephone hotline to give consumers advice from dieticians. No figures for these activities were provided for 2007 (1020).

The Belgian National Food and Drink Industry (**FEVIA**) maintains the FEVIA fund, which aims to encourage and financially support educational projects that promote nutrition, physical activity and a healthy way of living. Projects are funded through open competition, which attracted 140 applications in 2007 (up from 49 in 2006), of which 14 were successful. The fund is managed by the **King Baudouin Foundation** and allocates a prize fund of €50,000 (269).

2.3.2 Nutrition education: Summary and broader context

An overview of the research indicates that educational interventions have, along with point-of-purchase interventions, the largest impact in schools and workplaces. Several studies have shown increased fruit and vegetable consumption following education interventions, particularly those involving face-to-face contact; however, reducing salt and increasing fibre intake has been more difficult.⁴²

Tailored interventions and interventions using multimedia and the internet to complement traditional educational practices have been the most successful in increasing fruit and vegetable consumption in schools. For both workplaces and schools it has further been found that participatory and interactive educational methods, such as multimedia approaches, tend to yield larger positive effects than passive interventions, such as printed materials.⁴³

At a more general level, imperative to the success of nutrition education appears to be the involvement and commitment of “key individuals”. In both school-based interventions and in family settings, the commitment and enthusiasm of a key individual, such as a principal or parent, can increase the success of a programme.⁴⁴

Finally, given increased population ageing, more and more studies are focusing on the effects of nutrition education on older adults, to better inform them of nutrition information and help them to make healthy choices. Like nutrition education interventions in schools and workplaces, the success of interventions for older adults has been linked to interactive and participatory approaches, in which participants and health professionals are in close contact.⁴⁵

Many of the 2007 Platform activities in this area aimed to provide nutrition education to children, as does most statutory education. Some of these activities were multinational programmes such as Shape Up and EPODE, which have grown from the seed of small-scale projects that had apparent initial success in reducing obesity in participants. The apparent success of the Food Dudes programme has led to it making this transition from a small-scale to a national project. Other projects attempt to change attitudes and behaviours in a particular region or a section of the national child population. Given the varying size and aims of these programmes it is difficult to provide an overview, but it is noticeable that most are funded by members of the food industry who have significant resources available.

⁴² Buttriss, J., et al. (2004) “Successful ways to modify food choice: lessons from the literature”, *Nutrition Bulletin*, 29:4, 333–343; Pomerleau, J., et al. (2005) “Interventions designed to increase adult fruit and vegetable intake can be effective: A systematic review of the literature”, *Journal of Nutrition*, 135:10, 2486–2495.

⁴³ Buttriss, J., et al. (2004); Patterson, R.E., Kristal, A.R., Glanz, K. et al. (1997) “Components of the working well trial intervention associated with adoption of healthful diets” *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 13: 271–276.

⁴⁴ Sahay, T.B., Ashbury, F.D., Roberts, M., Rootman, I. (2006) “Effective components for nutrition interventions: a review and application of the literature”, *Health Promotion Practice*, 7:4, 1–10; Buttriss, J., et al. (2004).

⁴⁵ Sahyoun, N.R., Pratt, C.A., Anderson, A. (2004) “Evaluation of nutrition education interventions for older adults: a proposed framework”, *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, 104:1, 58–69.

When monitoring such commitments, it is helpful to state the specific actions that the programme accomplished, rather than its general aims or principles. Naturally, it is useful to monitor the number of people involved in the programme and what “involvement” consists of. Some of the Platform’s programmes have made provision for building in monitoring and assessment and networks for disseminating best practices. Some of these programmes have subsequently produced robust data on participation levels and outcomes. Often this is because the programme has collected baseline data on the health status of participants in order to compare them with post-project data. Naturally, there are difficulties in evaluating the effect of education on subsequent consumption behaviour, so many studies have relied on surveys of participant opinions before and after the conclusion of the project. In some cases, the monitoring forms contained references to monitoring or evaluation information that had been produced but had not been included in the form; it would give a much fuller picture of the Platform’s achievements if this information were included. Finally, given that many of the educational activities in schools are undertaken by members of the food industry, it would be useful to receive information on the presence, if any, of commercial branding in these activities; some Platform members do provide this information and it will be very valuable for any assessment of the activities’ effects.

2.3.3 Nutrition or healthy lifestyles information (off-label)

Producing and/or distributing information about nutritional values or healthy lifestyles using mechanisms other than labelling.

In 2006, 16 organisations in the Platform stated their intention to work together to develop a healthy lifestyles public information and advertising campaign, supported by the **CIAA**. The campaign’s stated aims are to raise the awareness of individuals (particularly children) about steps that can be taken to improve their diet and to increase levels of physical activity in order to achieve or maintain a healthy weight and lifestyle. To support this campaign, in 2007 the **CIAA** presented research to the Platform on how target groups understand and react to different healthy lifestyle messages. The only other stated achievements in 2007 are meetings with national authorities in four Member States to explore their willingness to participate in the future campaign (610, 546).

EuroCommerce member **Accor Services** organises a programme whereby restaurant owners and their employees sign up to receive nutritional information that educates them about balanced menus and encourages them to provide such menus. The programme is running in six (unspecified) European countries and 1,900 restaurants have signed the commitment charter. The main work of the programme is conceiving, adapting and designing the information tools (such as brochures, guidelines, posters and websites); the contents of the documents are prepared by national experts and are checked by the international expert panel of nutritionists. The programme will be monitored through random checks of affiliated restaurants every six months, and through employee surveys. The programme has generated media interest in France (157 press articles) and has also produced 40,000 recipe books for people in need, in partnership with the French Red Cross (1028).

FERCO members have agreed three main approaches to providing nutritional information to consumers: develop adequate nutritional information for the food they offer; agree with

their client organisations on the content of the information to be provided to consumers and the best way of doing so; establish with their suppliers how best to make adequate information on products and ingredients available and set traceability requirements. FERCO also acts to foster co-operation between its members and public authorities to raise awareness amongst consumers on the need to adopt a balanced diet and modify their behaviour. As well as participating in national public initiatives, contract catering companies are developing their own information campaigns in line with public initiatives. An overview of some of the members' activities in 2007 follows.

Sodexho Italy launched a campaign "Marrying pleasure with health" on consuming varied and balanced meals, checking BMI and waistline measurements, and physical activity. The campaign was targeted at adults in workplaces and at university students. In total, 1,800 posters and more than five million paper tray mats were distributed across 350 restaurants. **Serunion Spain** created nine nutritional displays that are included on the back of the monthly menus distributed to children in 1,300 Spanish schools. **ARESP Portugal** distributed 50,000 leaflets advocating a balanced diet and exercise in company canteens, as well as 1,000 "Food Wheel" posters; ARESP also targeted 90,000 pupils aged 6 to 10 years through posters, games, brochures and a travelling theatre. **Eurest Spain** organised educational workshops for 1,200 school canteen assistants across 300 schools, to the benefit of approximately 45,000 children. Finally, **Serist Italy** organised a campaign promoting a fruit and fibre-based breakfast at primary schools; 20,000 brochures were distributed and 50 conferences organised. Other FERCO members providing information on their activities in 2007 were **Sodexho Belgium**, **Albron Nederland**, **Gruppo Onama Italy** and **ISS Facility Services Sweden** (504, 505, 506).

The **UK Food Standards Agency** launched the third phase of its public awareness campaign on salt in 2007. The aim of this campaign is to raise awareness of the high proportion of salt that is found in everyday foods, as well as encouraging consumers to check labels and choose food options lower in salt. The campaign lasted several weeks and used TV, press and outdoor advertising, as well as leaflets and a dedicated website. Monitoring for this campaign indicated the following changes in the target audience by May 2007: the proportion claiming to make a special effort to cut down on salt in the diet rose from 40% in 2004 to 55% in 2007; the proportion who claimed to be cutting down on salt by checking food labels rose from 8% in 2004 to 17% in 2007; the proportion claiming to look at the label to find out the salt content rose from 34% in 2004 to 53% in 2007. The number of people was not provided and the target audience group was not defined (158).

The European Food Information Council (**EUFIC**) provides science-based information on food safety and quality and health and nutrition to the media, health and nutrition professionals, educators and opinion leaders in a way that promotes consumer understanding. In 2006, EUFIC redesigned its website to offer clear, sound, science-based information on food and nutrition. From June to September 2007, EUFIC conducted a "One Year On" survey of 3,004 visitors to the website to determine whether the new site met visitor expectations. Results from the survey showed that from 28 June 2006 to 31 October 2007 there were in excess of 7.9 million visitor sessions to the new site, which represents 25% year-on-year growth or the equivalent of 86,500 new visitor sessions per month. Compared to the baseline data from 2005–6, there has been an increase in the

proportion of health professionals, educators and scientists completing the survey: 63% of respondents regularly visit the site for professional use; there is also evidence that respondents visit more often and stay longer than in 2005–6.

With regard to specific EUFIC activities, in June 2007, EUFIC launched the “Latest Science” information service, which provides subscribers with a user-friendly summary of the most relevant recent research on nutrition, health and food safety; 26,000 subscribers receive this service. EUFIC also conducted two interviews with the Chair of the EU Platform, Robert Madelin, on the occasion of the Platform’s second anniversary and the launch of the EU White Paper on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity. These interviews have been provided online as podcasts and were downloaded a total of 5,022 times in 2007. Finally, EUFIC progressed with its commitment to translate its website material into new languages by launching the Greek EUFIC website to coincide with Commissioner Kyprianou’s visit to Greece to launch the Greek Obesity Platform, as well as translating the site into Polish, Czech and Slovak (520, 524, 526).

The **CIAA** finalised a brochure on labelling in 2006 that aimed to reinforce consumers’ understanding of the role of nutrients within the overall context of food intake and to empower people to make better-informed choices. In 2007, national federations have been translating this brochure into their national languages and context. A stated total of 11,100 copies of the brochure have been distributed across the various countries, and it has been publicised at various conferences and has received the support of national governments (595). The German Retail Association (**HDE**) has been participating in the development of voluntary nutrition information guidelines for German companies, together with the **German Ministry of Nutrition, Agriculture and Consumer Affairs** (738).

FEVIA, the Belgian National Food and Drink Industry Federation, maintains a Nutritional Policy Charter that requires signatories to possess knowledge of the nutritional and health aspects of their own projects and to provide appropriate nutritional knowledge to consumers. Other commitments of the charter include making progress to improving the nutritional content of food products and to collaborate with educational programmes to promote healthy lifestyles. By 2007, 234 companies had subscribed to the Charter, an increase of 30 on 2006 figures; these companies represent 56% of the turnover of the Belgian food industry. Data from the participating companies has been compiled to create the Second Report on the Nutritional Policy of the Belgian Food Industry, which indicates an increase in the number of companies investing in the training of their employees (263).

FEVIA also contributes 5% of the annual budget of NUBEL (€15,000), which is a mixed (private-public) non-profit initiative that gathers data on the nutritional composition of products and makes them accessible to the public. 2007 saw NUBEL introduce new communication methods, such as a food planner (a diary to keep track of food consumption), 600 licences for which have been purchased by health professionals, schools and consumers (268).

The programme “Ensemble surveillons sa corpulence” aims to make health professionals aware of the importance of calculating Body Mass Index (BMI) and other indicators of obesity in children, and provides tools to enable the measurement of such indicators. During 2007, the **French Danone Institute** distributed 1,795 free BMI measurement and monitoring kits to health professionals, including dietitians (who received 30% of kits),

general practitioners (20%), paediatricians (10%) and nurses (5%), while 300 refill kits were ordered. The programme also aims to raise parents' awareness of childhood corpulence through dissemination of leaflets, although figures on the distribution of leaflets were not provided for 2007 (800).

In 2007, **Nestlé** in the UK has worked with the **British Nutrition Foundation** to provide information on nutrition education for 1,284 "Make Space" clubs across England, which have approximately 12,000 members aged 11 to 19 years. The intervention had two main aspects: a newsletter called "Making Health Easier", which distributed to 1,284 youth workers and includes recipe cards following survey feedback; and a Recipe Competition, which was launched in January 2007 in all the clubs and awarded prizes in September and October 2007. Survey feedback has been positive (1026). **Mars** contributed €20,000 to the Irish Nutrition and Health Foundation (**NHF**) in 2007, which represents 5% of its annual budget. The NHF undertakes, supports and publishes consumer research, promotes lifestyle messages through General Practitioners, and runs a Workplace Wellbeing Programme that has been run in 35% of Irish companies (1014).

The **Metro Group** claims that its campaign on nutrition and exercise, "Gut für Dich", has made more than 200 million contacts through advertising, promotions and a website since it was launched in March 2007. The Group also distributes a fortnightly magazine containing nutrition articles that has a 1.5 million circulation in Germany and has distributed 2.5 million "Nutrition and Health" flyers in 345 stores (735). Similarly, **Nestlé** in Spain distributes information on wellness and nutrition through its "A Comer Bien!" platform, which comprises a twice-yearly magazine (mailed to 440,000 households), a website (450,000 visits during 2007) and a monthly newsletter (sent to 237,000 users each month) (1024).

Nestlé also contributes to the activities of the **German Platform on Nutrition and Exercise** ("Plattform Bewegung und Ernährung") through personal engagement of its management in the Platform's steering committee, as well as paying a membership fee. In 2007, the Platform has promoted an active lifestyle by addressing children through schools and day-care institutions, overseeing television campaigns aimed at children and parents, and sharing best practices between stakeholders (656).

Groupe Casino organised a ten-day event in April 2007 where 103 dieticians were present in 153 stores to give advice to consumers on nutritional balance and the need for variety in diets. In addition, by 2007 Groupe Casino had distributed 570,000 nutritional guides to consumers since April 2006 (725). Similarly, **Coop Italia** organised events in its 300 supermarkets and 70 hypermarkets where dieticians and nutrition experts gave advice to shoppers, as well as distributing a dossier on physical activity and healthy diets, which was produced under the supervision of the **Italian National Institute for Research on Food and Nutrition** and the **Italian Society for the Study of Obesity** (594).

2007 saw the conclusion of the "Health in Europe" project, which aimed to improve information and knowledge for the development of public health through television documentaries, radio broadcasts and press and internet articles on health issues. The eight hour-long documentaries it produced were adapted and distributed to public service broadcasters in twelve countries for transmission. "Health in Europe" is also supported by an online information exchange for **European Broadcasting Union** members

(www.healthineurope.tv) that contains an exchange pool of 123 pieces of television footage on health and 71 radio documentaries on the subject. The project was managed by the European Broadcasting Union, received the support of **DG SANCO** and was co-financed by the **European Commission's Public Health Programme** (655).

As part of its "Smart Choice" programme, running in 500 Belgian schools, **Mars** supports schools in the promotion of responsible snacking through the development of materials such as vending machine stickers with healthy lifestyle tips and 1,500 Smart Choice brochures (1036). Similarly focusing on schoolchildren, **FNSEA** (the French Farmers' Union) organises a national network of "open" farms, which are visited by schoolchildren every year. In May 2007, 581 FNSEA farmers distributed an educational poster, designed by the French national plan for nutrition and health, to 697 primary school teachers. On the basis that there are 25 children per classroom, FNSEA estimates that 17,400 children have seen this poster, which represents 35% of the total number of children visiting "open" farms each year (793).

Mars in Germany has developed the communication platform "CleverNaschen", which aims to provide parents with information on children's nutrition, exercise and health. The CleverNaschen website was set up in 2007 and provides advice from experts in different fields (psychology, sport, paediatrics) on how to cope with difficulties associated with children and snacking. Since September 2007, 129,473 page impressions of the website have been generated (1009). Many other members have created websites that provide information on nutrition and/or healthy lifestyles, including the **European Snack Association** (604). **Nestlé Portugal** maintain a section of their website (the "Wellbeing Area") that provides nutritional information; owing to the addition of new content and the development of interactive tools, the number of visits increased by 550% on 2006 levels to 45,000 visits in September 2007 (1021). The Belgian National Food and Drink Industry Federation (**FEVIA**) maintains a website that aims to provide objective information on the relationship between food and health, which was visited by an average of 11,365 visitors in November 2007 (266). The **UK Food Standards Agency** continues to support its "Food Vision" website, which aims to promote safe, sustainable and nutritious food to improve local community health and wellbeing (762). The **European Vending Association** has launched a web page dedicated to the dissemination of initiatives from vending actors on healthy lifestyles, which currently provides information on 31 initiatives by EVA members, including seven on reformulation activities (801). The EVA has also posted tips for healthy living on its intranet and created posters on this theme for internal display (803).

2.3.4 Nutrition information (off-label): Summary and broader context

A 2002 study of health promotion campaigns in the USA indicates that, on average, such campaigns have a small but quantifiable effect on behaviour change.⁴⁶ A recent meta-analysis suggested that nutrition campaigns for fruit and vegetable consumption, fat intake and breastfeeding have been slightly more successful on average than for other health

⁴⁶ Snyder, L.B. and Hamilton, M.A. (2002). "A meta-analysis of U.S. health campaign effects on behavior: Emphasize enforcement, exposure, and new information, and beware the secular trend." In R. Hornik (Ed.), *Public health communication: Evidence for behavior change*, pp. 357–383. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Earlbaum Associates.

topics. Furthermore, there was evidence that the most successful campaigns paid attention to the specific behavioural goals of the intervention, the target population and the message content and evaluation.⁴⁷

The provision of information on nutritional values or healthy food choices at the point of purchase has been shown in several cases to increase the sales of the targeted and healthy products, especially when supplemented by other strategies (e.g. pricing). In restaurant settings (which include workplaces, canteens and schools), the provision of information has been more successful than in grocery stores. Overall, it is unclear if these strategies yield long-term effects, as the scope of many studies is short-term.⁴⁸

Regarding the type of off-label nutrition information, current studies focus in a large part on the difference between print materials and online nutrition information. It appears that, overall, web-based interventions are more effective in improving nutritional knowledge and influencing behavioural outcomes than traditional non-web-based printed materials.⁴⁹ Most of these studies focused on adults, however, and initial studies involving adolescents have, interestingly, not yet found any differences in the effectiveness of web or non-web-based nutrition information.⁵⁰

Naturally, the provision of nutrition information covers a great variety of actors at many different levels of society, from co-ordinated multi-country, multi-platform healthy lifestyles public information campaigns, to the more targeted information provision of a website on a particular topic. Information was provided through traditional mass media advertising channels, websites, newsletters, brochures, posters, magazines and measurement kits, and was distributed in schools, after-school clubs, supermarkets, general practitioner surgeries and restaurants (thereby overlapping with the “point-of-purchase” category).

As the research indicates, there are difficulties in attributing changes in knowledge and behaviour to information provision activities, particularly over the long term. There are, however, some Platform actors that have attempted to assess the short-term impact of their campaigns through survey exercises, which is very helpful for monitoring purposes.

As noted above, it has also been shown that successful campaigns have some common features. Therefore, it is important to ensure that monitoring provides information that reflects the specific behavioural goals of the intervention and the specific characteristics of the target population, for example. In this regard, the **CIAA**’s research into how target

⁴⁷ Snyder, B. (2007) “Health communication campaigns and their impact on behaviour”, *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behaviour* 39:2, S32–40.

⁴⁸ Glanz, K., Hoelscher, D. (2004) “Increasing fruit and vegetable intake by changing environments, policy and pricing: restaurant-based research, strategies, and recommendations”, *Preventive Medicine*, Vol. 39:2, S88–S93; Glanz, K., Yaroch, A.L. (2004) “Strategies for increasing fruit and vegetable intake in grocery stores and communities: policy, pricing, and environmental change”, *Preventive Medicine*, Volume 39:2, S75–S80.

⁴⁹ Wantland, D.J., et al. (2004) “The effectiveness of Web-based vs. non-Web-based interventions: a meta-analysis of behavioral change outcomes”, *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 6:4, e40; Patterson, R.E., Kristal, A.R., Glanz, K. et al. (1997).

⁵⁰ Marks J.T., et al. (2006) “A comparison of Web and print media for physical activity promotion among adolescent girls”, *Journal of Adolescent Health* 39:1, 96–104.

groups understand and react to different healthy lifestyle messages is a helpful complementary exercise.

2.3.5 Promoting health qualities of own products

Highlighting the healthy aspects of food products, or promoting food products that are claimed to have health benefits, when the promoter is also the producer of the particular products (or represents the products' producers in some way).

Danone's "Danone et vous" is a programme that aims to provide nutritional and health information and advice for the French public, based on the advice of nutritionists and surveys of the programme's effects. The Danone et vous print programme is received by 3.7 million French households, and includes a tri-annual magazine and an annual guide; in addition, the Danone et vous website receives 700,000 hits a month, up from 400,000 in 2006 (782).

Nestlé's Nutrition Studio for consumers in Germany includes an online platform, where consumers can request personalised nutrition monitoring and advice, as well as accessing information. The online platform received an average of 350,000 visits between January and November 2007, making it the third most popular nutrition website in Germany (1020). In 2007, **Nestlé Portugal** distributed 20,000 twelve-page brochures and product samples inside trains leaving Lisbon between 5pm and 8pm over four days. (1022).

CIAA member **CEEREAL** (The European Cereal Breakfast Association) organised a 2007 Breakfast week to promote the importance of breakfast to regulators, EU officials and the media, and to demonstrate the progress the cereal industry is making in terms of reformulation. The two-day event was held at the European Parliament and the Residence Palace and the extent of materials given away indicates that approximately 800 people visited the event (778).

2.3.6 Point of purchase

Changing food purchasing patterns through mechanisms implemented at the point of purchase. These may include altering the product range available at point of purchase and the pricing of items in that range.

UNESDA has committed to ensure that there are no vending machines in primary schools (unless requested by the school directly). This commitment was monitored by sending questionnaires to 38,816 schools across four markets (Belgium, Germany, Spain and the Czech Republic), and the indicators suggest a 93.9% compliance rate. UNESDA has also committed that in secondary schools a full variety of beverages is offered (such as water, juice, low- and no-calorie drinks) in unbranded vending machines. Questionnaires sent to 24,352 secondary schools in the same four markets indicate that 66.9% had a full range of beverages in vending machines, and 69% reported that these machines were unbranded (581).

The European Vending Association (**EVA**) has been monitoring the adoption of, and adherence to, its Best Practice Guidance document "Vending in Schools: A Matter of Choice" by its 18 National Associations in Europe. This guidance document includes the following requirements: members of the EVA will always provide schools with the opportunity to choose an unbranded vending machine; members will offer a wide range of

products from which schools can choose, including products low in calories, sugar and fat, and they will not offer multi-packs or king-size products; and members will not actively seek to place vending machines in elementary or primary schools, unless asked to by the school or relevant education authorities.

Ten of the 18 National Associations reported back to the EVA (this response rate is affected by the fact that some of these Associations are based in countries that regulate vending machines in schools and thus did not respond). Reports from the associations show that the compliance rate for the commitments amounts to a weighted average of 80%. This is slightly lower than the 2006 figure of 84%; EVA attributes this outcome to the change in response rates. There were some discrepancies across areas: the EVA achieved a weighted average compliance rate of 88% in the area of “offering a broader product range”. The EVA estimates that 80% to 100% of operators that work with schools are covered, although it should be emphasised that this is not a certified figure (518).

The **European Snack Association** has produced guidelines on responsible practices for commercial communications, and sales in schools and vending, which it reports have been adopted by 80% of the sector in 2007, although absolute numbers were not provided (604). Similarly, in 2007 **Mars** developed a new Advertising Code, to be implemented in early 2008, which will ensure that the company does not place vending machines in primary schools (1018).

Members of the European Federation of Contract Catering Organisations (**FERCO**) have committed to a set of national guidelines on nutrition that are applicable to the contract catering sector. The guidelines include: increasing clients’ awareness of the need to offer varied food to consumers; promoting the use of less fat, sugar and salt and smaller servings; and proposing increased provision of fruit and vegetables to consumers. This framework has been implemented in varying ways according to country. For example, the Spanish Contract Catering Federation (**FEADRS**) has developed a Nutrition Protocol for school menus that fixes minimum requirements for catering companies. Each month, **Sodexho Spain** issues specific nutritional recommendations for schools across 298 locations, reaching 144,000 users. Serunion Spain uses an online database that stores information on different food types to support the creation of dishes and the size of servings for different consumers. For monthly school menus, all dishes are classified according to the type of nutrient they provide and its maximum and minimum frequency in a balanced diet. **Veneca Nederland**, **Albron Nederland**, **Sodexho Belgium**, **Eurest Sweden**, **ISS Facility Services Sweden** and **Fazer Amica Sweden** have all been involved with implementing national nutritional guidelines.

Amongst actions that are not consumer-facing, **FERCO** and its trade union equivalent (the **European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions**) signed a common statement in October 2007 that emphasizes the contribution that the contract catering sector could bring to the fight against obesity and stresses the need for training of employees with regards to nutritional principles and increasing consumer awareness of the importance of a well-balanced diet and physical exercise. This voluntary and non-binding agreement covers 600,000 employees. At a company level, **FERCO** member **Albron Nederland** organised two conferences for its 140 food suppliers to stimulate them to invest in product innovations to improve health benefits and to explain Albron

Nederland's goals for healthy food provision. **Sodexho Belgium** held a training course for 500 chefs to introduce alternative cooking methods and new recipes. Similarly, in November and December 2007 **FEADRS** organised 22 cooking workshops for 715 chefs operating in school canteens. Despite these efforts, in some cases FERCO members were hindered because client organisations are not interested in the nutritional quality of the menus (504, 505, 506, 507).

FRESHFEL (the EU Association for the Promotion of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables) organised a workshop with **FERCO** in 2007 that aimed to share experiences on the supply chain of fresh fruits and vegetables from producers to caterers. Both organisations agreed that developing the right products could increase consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables, although there are major challenges in terms of waste management, storage capacity, packaging and pricing (819). At the end of the grocery supply chain, the **Danish Chamber of Commerce** has encouraged its 20,000 member companies to adopt a 13-point plan that uses grocery stores' position as points of purchase to help consumers make healthier choices. Amongst other things, the plan commits stores to expand the selection of healthy foods such as fruit, vegetables, fish and energy-reduced alternatives, assisting in campaigns giving advice on healthy diets, and providing healthy recipes (727).

2.3.7 Point of purchase: Summary and broader context

An overview of the research on the topic suggests that there are several actions which can be taken at the point of purchase to promote a healthy diet. Environmental interventions to promote a healthy diet and influence eating patterns have been most successful in relatively confined spaces, such as schools, universities and the workplace.⁵¹ Specific point-of-purchase interventions in schools show that healthier diets can be stimulated by offering healthier options.⁵² However, if opportunities exist to acquire unhealthy foods via a different means, compensation might occur, thus eliminating the effect of interventions.⁵³

Pricing strategies are interventions commonly associated with positive results. Reducing the price of targeted health products, either via coupons or directly, has been effective to increase purchases in grocery stores, restaurants, canteens and at work sites. This is also the case for vending machines with price-reduced health products.⁵⁴ Other interventions at the point of purchase have yielded less clear or mixed results, such as increasing availability and access to healthy foods. Some interventions in supermarkets found no significant increase in fruit and vegetable consumption following increased availability.⁵⁵

⁵¹ Seymour, J.D., et al. (2004) "Impact of nutrition environmental interventions on point-of-purchase behavior in adults: a review", *Preventive Medicine*, 39, S108–S136; Story, M., et al. (2008) "Creating Healthy Food and Eating Environments: Policy and Environmental Approaches", *Annual Review of Public Health*, 29:6, 6.1–6.20.

⁵² French, S., et al. (2004) "An Environmental Intervention to Promote Lower-Fat Food Choices in Secondary Schools: Outcomes of the TACOS Study", *American Journal of Public Health*, 94:9, 1507–1512.

⁵³ Cullen, K., et al. (2006) "Exploring changes in middle-school student lunch consumption after local school food service policy modifications", *Public Health Nutrition*, 9:6, 814–820.

⁵⁴ Glanz and Hoelscher (2004); Buttriss, J., et al. (2004).

⁵⁵ Steenhuis, I., et al. (2004) "The impact of educational and environmental interventions in Dutch worksite cafeterias", *Health Promotion International*, 19:3, 335–343.

The two main Platform activity areas with regards to point of purchase concerned vending machines in schools and contract catering. **UNESDA**, **EVA** and the **ESA** have provided evidence of reduced activity or modified practices with regards to vending machines in schools across a range of European countries. The ways in which practices were modified were in providing unbranded vending machines, offering a greater variety of products (including healthier options) and adopting responsible commercial communications. **FERCO** has been the main actor in the field of contract catering, issuing guidelines for its national members, which have been implemented in various ways. There is also evidence that contract catering companies have taken actions to improve the production of healthy foods throughout their supply chains.

Monitoring in this area has made very useful attempts to quantify the extent of the actions, often through surveys. Again the importance of providing both absolute and relative numbers to put results into context must be stressed. Where the action is a voluntary agreement or statement, it is helpful to detail the specific actions arising that may have an impact on the health of European consumers.

2.3.8 Workplace-based initiatives

Initiatives that are aimed at encouraging or mandating various aspects of a healthy diet and lifestyle, often through a holistic programme of activities, and which are based in workplaces.

Since 2005, **Danone** has run an “Active Health Programme” to help employees gain more awareness about what impacts on their health, how they can manage this and what positive interventions they need to put in place to make changes. There are two strands to the project. Firstly, there is a core programme, consisting of regular activities such as access to healthy foods, workshops and Occupational Health support; secondly, specific campaigns take place throughout the year: in 2007, these focused on maintaining resolutions at New Year and taking advantage of summer activities in July. Attendance at workshops has been measured at over 60% of employees, measured levels of employee engagement have increased, and Danone is involved in the UK Business in the Community’s Leadership and Practitioners team on Workplace Health.

Kraft has developed workplace health and wellness programmes that focus on providing employees with information about healthy lifestyles, and providing access to preventative services. In 2007, “Health & Wellness” days were organised in eight countries, while ongoing information and initiatives about health and wellness, which encourage people to develop healthy habits, took place across the EU region. For example, Kraft in Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland organised an “Apple Day”, when employees received a welcome letter in the morning with information about the benefits of fruit consumption and apples were distributed in canteens, offices and at the reception. It appears that sales of fruit in the canteens increased subsequent to the Apple Day initiative. Kraft’s operations in Italy provide nutritional information about the meals served in its canteens and display the energy content of each dish and information about selecting a healthy lunch. A dietician is invited to explain the information and, if requested, to give recommendations for a personalised diet (456).

In 2007, **Kraft** also developed a Nutrition Training Programme for employees that aims to increase employees’ basic understanding of nutrients and diets and the role they play in

health and disease prevention. The first nutrition training session will be held in 2008 (456). Kraft's employee wellness programme also aims to create opportunities for physical activity. Activities that Kraft claims to provide include lunchtime walking or running and on-site exercise classes, and it also claims to offer facilities such as on-site showers and bicycle sheds to encourage people to be active at work. Kraft also states that it offers subsidised membership or free trials at fitness clubs (456).

Nestlé runs the programme "Wellness for Me" for its employees in Switzerland, which aims to motivate employees to adopt a healthy diet and to give them practical tools to achieve this goal. The programme puts on one event every second month (in 2007 there were five such events, focusing on reducing costs for healthy meals in the canteen, exercise bikes and low-fat ice cream), provides free membership to 30 sports and leisure clubs, and provides free fruit and water and pedometers to employees (449).

Mars Central Europe has developed a "Wellness" programme to be piloted in Poland. The programme has a defined structure, made up of a series of steps that cover a health risk assessment questionnaire, basic biometric data awareness, analysis of weekly diet and activity patterns, and the formation of groups of Mars associates who wish to take action in a particular aspect of their lives. As a result, **Mars Polska** provides all its associates with access to medical specialists to act on the information from the health risk assessment (completed by 225 Mars associates), as well as a free gym and swimming pool to those who participate in the Wellness programme. 1,100 Mars associates took part in a "Health Week", which included lectures on diet, physical exercise sessions, advice on smoking cessation, the provision of free healthy snacks, changes in the canteen and on-site sports activities. The decision to roll out the Wellness programme in Poland was taken after a health needs assessment survey of 670 Mars Polska associates, which provided baseline data against which to measure future progress. Mars aims to expand the programme throughout its Central Europe offices (1006).

Mars Hungary has developed a "Healthy Workplace" programme that it suggests can be modelled by any member of the Platform. The programme has four components. The first is the creation of voluntary "Fitness Ambassadors", trained by a professional fitness instructor, who co-ordinate activities within the company and promote physical activities. Twelve associates volunteered to be Fitness Ambassadors in 2007. The second component is a monthly hour-long session organised for associates on different nutrition topics, such as the importance of breakfast in healthy nutrition and education on BMI. Six of these sessions were held in 2007 for 900 associates. Thirdly, there is a "Regional Outdoor Programme", which promotes and creates opportunities for physical activity in as many local events as possible. Mars achieves this through sponsorship and organising new events, in conjunction with the Ministry of Local Government (13 events in 2007). Mars also established permanent opportunities for sporting participation by its associates (football, squash, tennis), and reports that 4,000 of these opportunities were created in 2007. The final component is a "Green Team", where associates can act on their ideas to help the local community. During 2007 this included activities such as gardening in the local school and painting local facilities. The total cost of the programme in 2007 was approximately €36,000 (1007).

In 2007, most of the activities for **PepsiCo**'s "Health and Wellness" programme took place in the company's Benelux operations, where the local "Taste for Tomorrow" initiative ran a series of workshops to educate local staff about healthy lifestyles. GDA labelling was rolled out on all food provided in local canteens, and fresh fruit is available on site for all employees (619).

In 2007 **Freshfel** developed a "Fresh Produce Charter" on fruit and vegetables in the workplace, which has been sent to nearly 100 Freshfel member companies and 20 National Associations. This charter commits the signatory company to provide fruit and vegetables for its employees in meetings and reception areas. Exact figures on the number of signatories are not provided, but they include companies such as **Fyffes**, the **Bama group**, **Dole** and **Chiquita** (775). Similarly, the Standing Committee of European Doctors (**CPME**) provides a 4.5kg fruit basket each week in its office at a weekly cost of €25 (1041).

2.3.9 Workplace initiatives: Summary and broader context

Several studies have shown positive results in increasing the consumption of fruit and vegetables and promoting a healthy lifestyle in the workplace. Information strategies, which consist of the provision of nutrition information at the point of purchase in work sites, have shown overall positive results in decreasing the overall energy intake of employees.⁵⁶ Furthermore, targeting particular healthy products and increasing their availability has been shown to be successful when combined with a pricing strategy.⁵⁷ There are also indications that a supportive home environment may increase the effects of an intervention.⁵⁸ Finally, simply increasing the amount of fruit and vegetables present in ready-made meals in cafeterias in the workplace yields positive results on employees' overall intake.⁵⁹ It should be noted, however, that at least one study could not observe any changes in fruit, vegetable or fat consumption.⁶⁰

The Platform commitments in this area include workplace initiatives by major companies who have the ability to reach thousands of workers across various European countries. Interestingly, many of these initiatives appear to have been set up as ongoing programmes, rather than isolated events, which could lead to the promotion of healthier lifestyles being ingrained in corporate activities in the long term. The initiatives cover the structured provision of information on both nutrition and physical activity; increased provision of healthier food options (such as fruit baskets) in workplace canteens and in the general work

⁵⁶ Seymour J.D., et al. (2004).

⁵⁷ Glanz, K. and Hoelscher, D. (2004); Jefferey, R.W., French, S.A., Raether, C. (1994) "An environmental intervention to increase fruit salad purchases in cafeteria", *Preventive Medicine*, 23, 788–792; Buttriss, J., et al. (2004).

⁵⁸ Sorensen, G., et al. (1999) "Increasing fruit and vegetable consumption through worksites and families in the Treatwell 5-a-day study", *American Journal of Public Health* 89:1, 54–60.

⁵⁹ Lassen, A., et al. (2003) "Successful strategies to increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables: results from the Danish '6 a day' Work-site Canteen Model Study", *Public Health Nutrition*, 7:2, 263–270.

⁶⁰ Engbers, L.H., et al. (2006) "The effects of a controlled worksite environmental intervention on determinants of dietary behaviour and self-reported fruit, vegetable and fat intake", *BMC Public Health* 6, 253.

environment; organizing specific sport and physical activity initiatives; and facilitating access to physical activity through subsidies relating to sports venues.

The two main issues for monitoring such commitments are the number of employees participating in the initiatives and the initiatives' effects on the health of these employees. In general, the companies have been able to provide figures on the number of employees participating in these schemes, although this varies according to actor. A few companies appear to have laid the foundations for monitoring the effect of these initiatives on their employees by, for example, gathering baseline data.

2.3.10 Attempting to influence policy-makers

Attempts to advance the aims of the Platform through directly engaging and influencing policy-makers.

The European Association for the Study of Obesity (**EASO**) aims to inform European health policy towards obesity prevention and management. In April 2007, it convened the European Congress on Obesity, which involved 2,700 participants and gave media briefings highlighting the rising prevalence of overweight and obesity. EASO also formed three new task forces to deal with childhood obesity, obesity prevention and obesity management (533).

The International Obesity Task Force (**IOTF**) undertook a range of activities aimed at improving the understanding of obesity and its prevention in 2007. These actions included: media advocacy through briefings for journalists focused on the European Congress on Obesity; collaborating with **WHO Europe** on the development of the Second Food and Nutrition Action Plan; co-ordination with the WHO and Member States to strengthen support for key objectives of the European Charter on Counteracting Obesity; and publishing revised estimates for overweight and obesity in adults and children in Europe (531). The IOTF has also commenced the development of a dynamic modelling tool to evaluate potential health gain and assess the lifestyle-mediated health impact of policies, called DYNAMO-HIA (814). Finally, the IOTF has supported the development of the European Childhood Obesity Prevention Alliance (811).

One of the **IOTF**'s main activities in 2007 was the Health Promotion Through Obesity Prevention Across Europe: An Integrated Analysis To Support European Health Policy (HOPE) project. The aim of HOPE is to create a scientific network of European research efforts on the determinants and interventions of nutrition, physical activity, and overweight and obesity prevention. This "network of networks" intends to pull together all expertise and projects that are currently ongoing or being developed in this area within the European Union. This compilation of knowledge within the network will be translated into policy recommendations for obesity prevention. In terms of actions for 2007, the IOTF has developed ten work packages to move towards the establishment of HOPE, covering all its intended functions. Amongst other actions, these packages involved contacting leaders of all ongoing research efforts at the European level on obesity prevention, nutrition and physical activity, and health inequalities. Contact was established with 3,000 obesity-related organisations affiliated to the IASO and EASO in the European region, several hundred of whom subsequently visited the HOPE website. In addition,

approximately 400 individuals from the scientific and policy community have contacted the HOPE team and asked to be kept informed of ongoing developments (809).

One of the main actions of the International Baby Food Action Network (**IBFAN**) in 2007 has been the campaign to influence the implementation of the EC directive 2006/141/CE into national laws. The campaign involved up to three internet postings per month, as well as website alerts to IBFAN groups, partner NGOs and MEPs, and meetings with the **UK Food Standards Agency** and the legal unit of the **EC's Directorate-General for Health and Consumer Protection**. IBFAN also claims to have reached 1,000 health professionals and lay organisations regarding its work in the European region. In terms of outcomes, IBFAN indicates there is some evidence of changes in national policies, statements from policy officials and draft proposals for legislation implementing the Directive. Statistics for the UK indicate a rise in breastfeeding initiation rates but no significant rise in duration; research published in 2007 shows that the baby drinks market in the UK has decreased, and IBFAN suggests this may be owing to the actions of NGOs such as itself (615).

FERCO has produced a press release and 500 copies of a brochure illustrating the contribution that contract catering can make to the fight against obesity in Europe. These materials were produced for an audience of 160 decision-makers and public health authorities at an event organised by the EU Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health in July 2007 (820).

The Standing Committee of European Doctors (**CPME**) has continued its efforts to advocate the prevention of cardiovascular disease in Europe. To do so, CPME has met with members of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Health and Consumer Protection (**DG SANCO**) and has prepared for an event during the European Health Forum Gastein 2008 (653).

2.3.11 Influencing policy-makers: Summary and broader context

Since policy-makers have the ability to initiate and shape government actions that can deploy significant resources to tackle obesity, it is understandable that some organisations should attempt to influence or inform their decisions. The variety and complexity of modern governmental processes means that organisations with sufficient information, contacts or resources have multiple opportunities to exert influence.⁶¹ However, this variety and complexity⁶² also mean that the process by which influence is exerted is complex and presents many obstacles to organisations wishing to "make their case", which means that attempts to do so often have limited success.⁶³

Most of the Platform members reporting on actions in this area are non-governmental organisations concerned with obesity or related issues. Understandably, these members

⁶¹ Coen, D. (1998) "The European Business Interest and the Nation State: Large Firm Lobbying in the European Union and Member States", *European Journal of Public Policy* 18:75–100.

⁶² European Parliament Directorate-General for Research (2003) *Lobbying in the European Union: Current Rules and Practices*. Working Paper AFC0 104 EN 04-2003.

⁶³ Hull, R. (1993) "Lobbying Brussels: A View from Within", in Mazey, S. and Jeremy Richardson (eds) *Lobbying in the European Community*, pp. 82–92. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

reported mainly on public awareness-raising activities, rather than more informal contacts with policy-makers. Given the complexities of attempting to influence policy-makers, it can be difficult to attribute particular actions to resulting policy decisions. Therefore, accurate monitoring in this area may often concentrate on outputs, such as the number of press conferences held or materials distributed, rather than on outcomes, such as influencing legislative changes.

2.4 Physical activity

2.4.1 Non-sport participation

Providing specific opportunities for non-sport physical activity.

The programme “Faut que ça bouge”, supported by **Danone**, uses a pedagogical kit to help French schoolteachers to organise games that involve physical activity. The programme was promoted in two teachers’ magazines, and 330 kits have been ordered online since October 2007 (463).

2.4.2 Sport participation

Providing specific opportunities for non-sport physical activity.

2007 saw 2.6 million children from 110,000 schools across 40 countries participating in the FIFA-endorsed **Danone** Nations Cup in 2007. 40 teams qualified for the final stages in France, and 32,000 spectators attended the final in Lyons (462).

The Fitness Industry Association (**FIA**) expanded its “GO” (“Girls Only”) scheme, which offers sport and exercise opportunities for girls 15 to 16 years old. This is accomplished by partnering schools with local health clubs and fitness centres, so that a fitness instructor can offer tailored group activity sessions and support. In 2007, 152 schools participated (compared to 94 in 2006), with 4,560 children taking part (compared to 2,820 in 2006). An evaluation of the programme was undertaken by **Loughborough University**. This indicated that 70% of surveyed participants judged the programme to be “good” at giving them the chance to learn new skills (20% “very good”, 10% “not good”), 76% thought it was “good” at helping them to find out more about other opportunities for them and their friends to be active (15% “very good”, 9% “not good”) and 64% said it encouraged them to learn more about a healthy lifestyle (30% “not good”, 6% “very good”). From the perspective of the participating fitness clubs, the GO programme was described as quite easy (72%) or very easy (14%) to implement, with the remaining club finding it very difficult. From the teachers’ point of view, the most successful outcomes of GO were “providing an enjoyable experience” and “providing an opportunity to participate in high-quality facilities”: 88% of teachers rated GO as either successful or very successful on these outcomes. “Improving girls’ skills” and “educating girls about the importance of healthy lifestyles” were rated as successful or very successful by 87% and 78% of teachers respectively. Finally, 67% of teachers rated GO as successful or very successful in “encouraging pupils to be more physically active” and in “improving the motivation of school staff to deliver high quality PE and school sport” (798).

Ferrero (a member of **CIAA**) has supported a variety of physical activity events in different EU Member States. These include Italy’s National Youth Games, which involved

approximately 1.7 million children in 2007, and the Italian National Student Games, which involved approximately 600,000 students aged 16–18 years. Ferrero has been involved in providing opportunities for volleyball and basketball, sailing and athletics in Spain, which involved 500, 10,000 and 16,232 children respectively. 2007 saw children competing in the Kinder Delice Cup, which involved 14,000 primary schools and 1.5 million children in Poland competing for sports equipment. Ferrero has also supported a volleyball project in Portugal with 70,000 participants, and an athletics championship in the Czech Republic (involving 420 schools and 4,000 children) (431).

Nestlé UK's Kids Club Tennis scheme concluded in 2007. The initiative has provided out-of-school-hours clubs to give the opportunity to play tennis to children aged 4 to 12 years who otherwise would not be able to do so. An estimated 35,000 children participated over the seven years of the £300,000 scheme, which was run in conjunction with the Lawn Tennis Association and the Kids' Club Network. In addition, 2,000 clubs signed up to the "Tennis Fests", which bring together out-of-hours clubs to participate in activities from the Kids Club Tennis Scheme; Nestlé reports that 40,000 children played in this scheme every week. Recently, Nestlé reports that it has moved towards a strategy of supporting projects that aim to make a real social difference in the area of nutrition and health. A subsequent review of the tennis clubs initiative found that positive social benefit impacts were not readily measurable from these activities because, although they encouraged a healthy, active lifestyle, they were not reaching the appropriate levels in society. As a result, Nestlé has discontinued its support for the clubs and is considering new initiatives (450).

In 2007, **Nestlé Austria** organised nine running events for children, including one in each federal state of Austria and a final competition for the best performers. In total, 23,800 children from 618 schools participated. The aim of the events was to raise the awareness of children, teachers and parents regarding the importance of physical activity (437). **Mars Poland** funds and co-ordinates the "Biegi Bielice Young Europeans' Run", which in 2007 allowed more than 3,000 schoolchildren from approximately 200 Polish schools to attend a day of athletics events, making it the largest such event for schoolchildren in Poland. The event also focuses on the promotion of sport and physical activity (1012).

2.4.3 Physical activity participation (sport and non-sport): Summary and broader context

The benefits of physical activity are widely documented. The World Health Organisation, for example, notes that physical activity is of benefit at all weights because it reduces the likelihood of cardiovascular diseases, hypertension, and type two diabetes; it beneficially influences fat and carbohydrate metabolism; and it can increase muscle mass.⁶⁴

Providing opportunities for physical activity is possible at both an individual and a population level. Most interventions documented in academic literature and tested in random trials focus on the individual level, which means that little to no evidence is available regarding population-level interventions.⁶⁵ Individual interventions aim to change

⁶⁴ World Health Organisation (2007) "The Challenge of Obesity in the WHO European Region and the strategies for response", p.15.

⁶⁵ Wareham N., Sluijs E., Ekelund, U. (2005) "Physical Activity and Obesity Prevention: a Review of the Current Evidence", *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society*, 64, 229–247; Hillsdon, M., Foster, C., Cavill, N.,

individual behaviour, either by stimulating physical activity or by discouraging sedentary behaviour. Evidence for population level interventions, such as the introduction of bicycle lanes, is more difficult to generate because controlled trials are virtually impossible.

The relationship between physical activity, weight and obesity is often described as complex. Nevertheless, studies seem to indicate physical activity is more effective as a strategy for weight maintenance and the prevention of weight gain than for strongly reducing weight.⁶⁶ Thus, physical activity programmes might yield more results in maintaining healthy body weights, rather than reducing weight in the long run.⁶⁷

Several factors have been identified as influencing the success of physical activity interventions and programmes for children and adolescents. Multi-component interventions, which combine educational and environmental⁶⁸ interventions, yield more positive results in terms of participation and weight loss, especially amongst adolescents.⁶⁹ For adolescents, the involvement of the family has been shown to be conducive to success, a finding which also comes to the fore in nutrition education.

The Platform commitments in the area of sport participation focus mainly on events for children organised by actors from the food industry in mainstream sports such as football, tennis and athletics. In total, it appears that over 2.5 million children have participated in sports events organised by Platform members in 2007. The monitoring of these achievements has focused on providing quantitative information on the numbers of participants in the interventions, which is useful.

The benefits of non-sport physical activity, also called non-exercise or leisure-time physical activity, have also received support. Increased activity in actions such as walking, cycling and climbing stairs has been linked to healthier lives.⁷⁰ Furthermore, indications exist that constant levels of moderate physical activity will result in higher levels of energy burned than bursts of high-intensity physical activity.⁷¹

Crombie, H., Naidoo, B. (2005) *The effectiveness of public health interventions for increasing physical activity among adults: a review of reviews, Evidence briefing*, London: Health Development Agency.

⁶⁶ Bensimhon, D.R., Kraus, W.E., Donahue, M.P. (2006) "Obesity and physical activity: a review", *American Heart Journal*, 151:3, 598–603.

⁶⁷ Tremblay, A. and Therrien, F. (2006) "Physical activity and body functionality: implications for obesity prevention and treatment", *Canadian Journal Physiology and Pharmacology*, 84:2, 149–56.

⁶⁸ Environmental interventions in this review were those where children participated in actual physical activities (such as playground games), yet did not receive any education.

⁶⁹ Sluijs, E.M.F. van, et al. (2007) "Effectiveness of interventions to promote physical activity in children and adolescents: systematic review of controlled trials", *British Medical Journal*, 335:7622, 703–7.

⁷⁰ van Baak, M.A., et al. (2003) "Leisure-time activity is an important determinant of long-term weight maintenance after weight loss in the Sibutramine Trial on Obesity Reduction and Maintenance (STORM trial)", *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 78, 209–214; Matthews, C.E., et al. (2007) "Influence of exercise, walking, cycling, and overall no exercise physical activity on mortality in Chinese women", *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 165:12, 1343–50.

⁷¹ Westerterp K. (2001) "Pattern and Intensity of physical Activity", *Nature*, 410:6828, 539.

Fewer Platform commitments in 2007 focused on non-sport participation than on sport participation. This may be because non-sport participation lacks the profile and infrastructure associated with sports. Nevertheless, as indicated above, there is evidence that increased physical activity in everyday life may have beneficial health effects. In monitoring any such initiatives it would be very helpful if subsequent changes in behaviour for participants could be assessed, although this presents challenges.

2.4.4 Facilitating access

Initiatives that help to create conditions that enable people to take part in physical activity (usually sport-based) – for example, providing relevant equipment or subsidising sport fees. This does not include physical activity information provision.

Many of the commitments by the Fitness Industry Association (**FIA**) relate to building links between fitness clubs and groups such as employees or teenagers. For example, in 2007 the FIA made some progress with its “Active at Work” campaign, which aims to increase physical activity opportunities for employees through expert physical activity coaching and temporary membership of clubs within active areas. In 2007, the main focus was on planning and establishing partnerships between workplaces and fitness clubs in Scotland and London. Eight partnerships of a targeted twelve were established in Scotland, which are anticipated to reach 240 people, and eight partnerships of a targeted ten were established in London, also anticipated to reach 240 people. The FIA has stated that the programme, when fully operational, will be monitored rigorously, including baseline measurements (796).

In addition, the **FIA**’s UK “Adopt a School” programme aims to forge community-based links between primary schools and leisure centres or private health and fitness clubs, in order to introduce children aged 10 and 11 years to a variety of opportunities for physical activity. Each participating club provides the services of a highly qualified instructor, along with the use of their facilities, for an average of one hour a week. In 2007, 295 individual programmes took place, which equates to the involvement of 8,850 children. These figures are close to the FIA’s 2007 targets of initiating 300 programmes and involving 9,000 children. As for the GO programme, an evaluation has been carried out by the Institute of Youth Sport, School of Sport Exercise Science, **Loughborough University**, UK. This report states that teachers had a positive view of the outcomes of the programme, with 83% of respondents claiming that the programme had been successful in encouraging pupils to engage in new physical activities beyond their involvement in the programme. Results also indicate that more pupils are reporting meeting the recommended one hour of activity per day at the end of the programme than at the beginning (797).

Nestlé Romania runs a “Sport and entertainment club” competition, whereby children create their own clubs for physical activity. Each club creates its own name, values, logo and slogan, as well as establishing its members. The clubs that win the competition are rewarded by Nestlé with diplomas and the sports equipment necessary for them to continue the activities of the club. As of December 2007, there were 34 sport and entertainment school clubs, with 2,234 child members (1019). The **Mars** “Smart Choice” programme, running in 500 Belgian schools, allows schools to earn Smart Choice sports points, which they can exchange for sports equipment (1036). Finally, the **Ferrero** “1...2...3... Volley” project has provided 7,000 Italian schools with free “Volley Kits”

(including volleyball nets and approximately 30,000 volleyballs) since 2003, although specific figures for 2007 were not provided (431).

The **European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation** has continued to support its German quality-assurance label called “Sport Pro Gesundheit” (Sport for Health) for sport clubs who want to be identified as providing quality physical activity courses. There are 23 sports confederations participating at federal level, with 45 members of staff involved in the scheme (a further 73 confederations are supporting the work at a regional level). Overall, 7,500 trainers from German sports clubs participate in Sport Pro Gesundheit across approximately 15,000 courses. The scheme is now accepted by most health insurance companies, who partially or totally reimburse course costs. In 2007, the main actions were improving the scheme’s existing quality management and translating the quality management manual into English (638).

The Federation of the European Play Industry (**FEPI**) has been working towards creating a “Capital of Play Award” in order to increase physical activity amongst children, by stimulating competition between European municipalities to increase outdoor space available and the quality and creativity of the playgrounds (741). Following a successful feasibility study in 2006, in 2007 FEPI segmented the project into different European regions where it will be implemented incrementally to meet various deadlines. The pioneer region in 2007 was the Nordic region, and following meetings in Norway, Finland and Sweden it was agreed that a parallel Capital of Play award scheme will be implemented in each country simultaneously as a first stage (741).

Nestlé has provided 50,000 Danish Kroner in 2007 (as part of a four-year, 300,000 DKR commitment) to support four “Julemaerkehomes” in Denmark. These homes allow 700 obese children a year to stay for 10 weeks at a time without charge and take part in constructive activities that aim to encourage them to lead healthier, more active lives (657).

Nestlé Ireland provides funding, professional support and expertise to the Irish Schools’ Athletics Association and Parks Tennis Ireland, for the development of athletics and tennis programmes amongst young people in Ireland. Nestlé indicates that in 2007 35,000 children from 850 secondary schools participated in the athletics events and 25,000 in the tennis events, with two new Parks Tennis camps opened (443).

2.4.5 Facilitating access: Summary and broader context

Facilitating access and opportunities for physical activity mainly relates to increasing access to sports. Sports have been related to healthy lifestyles and weight management. Hence, increasing public participation in sports has been important to many governments aiming to improve public health.⁷² Studies have, however, shown that merely providing access by increasing the number of venues for sports participation is not sufficient. Although minor increases in participation have been noted, increasing availability in itself does not seem to promote sports participation.⁷³ Thus, additional strategies may be required to increase sports participation.

⁷² Fox K., Hillsdon M. (2007) “Physical activity and obesity”, *Obesity Reviews*, 8:S1, 115-121.

⁷³ *ibid.* Foresight (2007).

It appears that the need to reach many different groups of the population is important to the provision of sports activities. Some studies have shown that people in lower socio-economic groups miss out on sports and participate in physical activities to a lesser extent.⁷⁴ Thus the facilitation of access could be targeted on those groups with traditionally low sports and physical activity participation.

Although there is some overlap with the area of sport participation, facilitating access concentrates mainly on removing logistical or financial barriers to sport participation, or creating opportunities for participation that last beyond the particular programme. Unsurprisingly, this means that the Platform activities in this area are diverse, from forging links between fitness clubs and sectors of the community to a quality standard for physical activity courses. Although many of the activities focus on children, there is more diversity in the target audiences than for the sport participation category, including some groups that traditionally have low participation in sports. If the intervention aims to address certain groups, it would be useful if these groups were explicitly stated.

Another issue for monitoring concerns the persistence of effects arising from attempts to facilitate access to sports. If the intervention aims to create a self-sustaining change in behaviour, then ideally monitoring should be introduced to measure the success of this aim. This would require a lasting engagement with the intervention's target audience as research subjects, but would also give compelling evidence of the initiative's successes.

2.4.6 Physical activity information

Producing and/or distributing information about physical activity.

November 2007 saw the official launch of the "PATHE" project and its first working group meetings. The broad aims of PATHE are: to build the capacity of European Sport for All (SFA) organisations to undertake physical activity promotion campaigns; and to disseminate best knowledge and best practices on the promotion of physical activity in Europe. The project has a budget of €432,355 and is supported by the **European Commission** through its Public Health Programme (754).

The **FERCO** member **Serist Italy** organised an information campaign on sport and nutrition for schools in the north of Italy, in partnership with a soccer team. The target groups were primary school pupils, their parents and teachers, and involved 6,000 people. The event distributed 5,000 brochures, offered nutrition courses with experts and held events and conferences in the football stadium (506).

The Balisto "Active Kids Guide", supported by **Mars**, informs parents about places that offer exercise and physical activity opportunities for their children in nine German regions. The guide was made available to purchase in bookshops and 75,000 of the 90,000 copies had been sold by 2007 (1017).

Nestlé Romania has provided support for teachers to educate children about the importance of physical activity by producing a booklet "Sports and Entertainment Clubs", endorsed by the **Romanian Ministry of Education**. Between October 2007 and December 2007, 139 teachers and 2,234 children were involved in this initiative (1019).

⁷⁴ Fox K., Hillsdon M. (2007).

2.4.7 Sponsorship

The specific act of providing money to a team, organisation or event (usually in exchange for publicity) where the provider's involvement is solely financial.

Ferrero (a member of **CIAA**) sponsors sports teams in different EU Member States, including volleyball and basketball in Italy and basketball in France (431). **Nestlé Sweden** sponsored the running event “Springtime”, which took place in Helsingborg and involved 5,000 participants (447). The **CIAA** member **KiMs** sponsors the children’s schools of the Danish Handball Federation, which involved 6,500 children at 110 schools in 2007 (618).

2.4.8 Sponsorship: Summary and broader context

Sponsorship here is understood as simply providing money to a team, organisation or event, rather than taking part in management. The effects of sponsorship can be similar to those of facilitating access where sponsorship allows increased sports participation. If the sponsorship concerns supporting professional sports organisations, it may have similar effects to providing physical activity information (as well as providing exposure for the sponsor).

Sporting settings may offer an attractive means for promoting healthy lifestyles, given their potential to reach elusive target groups. Policy development in the sport setting remains, however, an understudied area of health promotion.⁷⁵ A recent study assessed the results of sponsorship of sporting associations by a health agency in Australia.⁷⁶ The agency decided health messages for particular sports and events, focusing on smoke-free facilities, the provision of healthy food alternatives and responsible alcohol provision. The study found that policy development for health promotion can be achieved through sponsoring sports clubs when this sponsorship is well supported by health agencies and the appropriateness of the specific behaviours to be encouraged for a given sport is considered.⁷⁷

Most of the Platform’s sponsorship activities in 2007 were undertaken by members from the food industry and were mostly directed at sponsoring professional sports teams and sporting events that involve children. The monitoring of these activities has focused on the number of people participating in the events, which is useful.

2.5 Research

2.5.1 Conducting research

Conducting research to advance understanding of issues related to the aims of the Platform.

The **CIAA** has undertaken a survey to quantify industry’s efforts in reformulation, product choice and labelling since 2004 in 11 food categories across five Member State markets: Spain, France, the UK, Italy and the Netherlands. The aim of this study is to encourage

⁷⁵ Jackson, N.W., et al (2005) Policy interventions implemented through sporting organisations for promoting healthy behaviour change. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*, CD004809.

⁷⁶ Dobbinson, S., Hayman, J., Livingston, P. (2006) “Prevalence of health promotion policies in sports clubs in Victoria, Australia”, *Health Promotion International* 21:2, 121-129.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

the CIAA's members to use scientific expertise to produce enjoyable and nutritious foods that make it easier for consumers to follow a suitable diet, and to increase the range of available portion sizes and food energy levels. Descriptions from the CIAA suggest that this study is methodologically rigorous, and will be submitted for independent review. Expenditure on this study has amounted to €140,000 excluding tax and expenses; the full report is scheduled for publication in March 2008 (826).

The **UK Food Standards Agency's** National Diet and Nutrition Survey will report information on food consumption, nutrient intakes, nutritional status and physical measurements in a representative sample of the UK population. The Survey will provide an evidence base for diet and nutrition policy-making, allow detailed food chemical exposure assessments to support food safety work, and monitor progress towards diet and nutrition policy objectives. The £1.8 million budget for 2007 went towards carrying out a comparison study, developing a dietary data collection method, ethical approval, and recruiting local processing laboratories. The survey will produce headline data in 2009 (765).

In 2007, **EUFIC** disseminated its research on consumers' understanding of on-pack nutrition communications, conducted in 2006. A paper based on the research was published in the peer-reviewed *Journal of Public Health* in October 2007 (and is cited in this report), while EUFIC presented the findings to the United States' Food and Drugs Administration, Australian governmental representatives and stakeholders, and more than 1,400 conference delegates at 30 separate meetings (521).

Since 2004, **AREFLH** (Fruit, Vegetable and Horticultural European Regions) has been evaluating the communication and education practices of 13 European fruit and vegetable-producing regions in order to identify and disseminate best practices. In 2007, AREFLH disseminated a practical guide to regional promotional strategies (with a focus on healthy diets) and practical actions, based on 15 pilot cases in France, Spain and Italy. This guide was launched at the international European Geography Association Congress and has been distributed to 100 stakeholders via USB keys, to 350 members and partners of AREFLH through bulletins, and to professional reviews by means of a press conference. The initiative has led to inter-country exchange of experiences and practices, and the definition of common strategies at regional and local level between educational authorities, municipalities and agricultural organisations (724).

2007 saw the second edition of **Freshfel** Europe's "Consumption Monitor", which aims to give an overview of the consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables across the EU Member States. In 2007 Freshfel improved the presentation of data and the scope and methodology of its collection. The Monitor is based on an analysis of Eurostat and Faostat data on production and trade to identify trends in the supply and per capita consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables at EU level and Member State level for the period 2000 to 2006. As in 2006, Freshfel distributed a press release to more than 1,000 contacts that announced the report's release, distributed 300 hard copies of the report and disseminated additional copies to Member State authorities, as well as presenting the results at meetings and conferences (529).

Ferrero has conducted research into the reaction of Italian mothers to the presence of GDA labelling on sweet bakery products. This research suggested that interest in the

additional nutritional information was high, and that consumers felt reassured and more aware of their purchasing and consumption behaviour, although there were weaknesses in the appearance and visibility of such labelling. It is not clear how many people participated in this research or the proportion of participants that gave particular answers (827).

In 2007, the **EuroCoop** member **Coop Italia** publicly presented the research it commissioned from the **University of Rome** into food advertising broadcast between the hours of 16:00 and 19:00 in 11 European countries. Further information about the research findings was not available (594).

2.5.2 Supporting research

Initiatives that support the undertaking of research into issues related to the aims of the Platform. For example: creating networks for the exchange of research findings and techniques; funding professional development in relevant research areas; providing funding for research.

After nine months of national, regional and online consultation, in September 2007 the **European Technology Platform** published its Strategic Research Agenda for its “Food for Life” activities, which aim to produce innovative food products and processes to improve the wellbeing of European consumers. This initiative is supported by a **European Commission Specific Support Action** to the value of €533,540 (614).

The **European Federation for the Association of Dieticians** has continued to establish and expand a European Thematic Network for Dietetics for dietetic practitioners and educators and nutritional scientists, in order to disseminate knowledge and best practices. In 2007, the Network involved 112 partner organisations, including: 28 Dietetic Associations in 23 countries, representing over 26,000 dieticians and approximately 5,000 student dieticians; 200 Higher Education Institutions; quality assurance agencies and other agencies involved in dietetic and nutrition promotion. In 2006, the Network had 90 partners. Draft competence statements and performance indicators for the Network were prepared in 2007 and practising dieticians throughout Europe will be consulted on their adoption in April 2008. The network is supported by a website that attracted more than 10,000 unique visits from 71 countries between May and November 2007 (282).

In November 2007, **EUFIC** held a two-day “Food in Action” scientific conference titled “Challenging Obesity through Motivation and Behavioural Change”. Starting with how food choice develops at a young age, through consumers’ attitudes and behaviour towards food label information, the conference investigated the influence of the environment and the importance that psychological aspects play in the onset of obesity at an early age. The role of physical activity in energy balance was tackled, together with ongoing initiatives and programmes aiming at finding solutions. A total of 21 speakers presented their research findings, 142 participants attended from 21 different countries, and 5,623 visitors accessed the “Food in Action” microsite in the two months following the conference (1033).

Similarly, **Freshfel** worked with **Aprifel** (its French association) to support the organisation of the 2007 International Conference to disseminate the latest scientific research on the role of fruit and vegetables in the fight against obesity. The conference was held in collaboration with the European Commission and aimed to attract 150 participants, although final attendance figures were not provided (776).

The European Association for the Study of Obesity (**EASO**), in conjunction with the **International Obesity Task Force**, supported the roll-out of an online educational training course for the management of obesity and prevention of related chronic diseases called “SCOPE” (Specialist Certification of Obesity Professional Education). This training course was developed over three years, with contributions from more than 20 individual European experts and an expert review committee. Currently, there are 292 medical registrants for the scheme and so far 11 registrants have successfully completed the online course (533, 810).

Freshfel Europe has continued to produce its bi-monthly newsletter “Fresh Times”, which aims to raise awareness of initiatives to stimulate the consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables, leading towards the sharing of best practices that can raise the effectiveness of such campaigns. Fresh Times is distributed through a mailing list of more than 1,000 contacts, and six issues were produced in 2007. As in 2006, Freshfel recently surveyed readers of Fresh Times on their attitudes towards the newsletter. The results indicate that 91% of respondents agree or strongly agree that Fresh Times was a good tool for exchanging information and good practices, with 9% disagreeing (in 2006, 100% agreed or strongly agreed); 55% agreed, 27% strongly agreed and 18% disagreed with the view that Fresh Times encourages the realisation of more promotional activities (compared to 60%, 36% and 4% respectively in 2006); and 60% agreed, 30% strongly agreed and 10% disagreed that Fresh Times helps to raise the effectiveness of campaigns, which is very similar to the 2006 results. However, it is not clear how many people responded to this survey (530).

Nestlé Spain produces “Dialogues of Nestlé Nutrition”, a twice-yearly publication that was distributed to 7,000 nutrition and health professionals and key opinion leaders (for example, universities and nutrition societies) in 2007. The content of the publication is selected from current affairs and scientific sources, and aims to increase dialogue within the target constituencies (446).

In order to stimulate scientific research on physical activity, **Mars** awards 20 Young Investigator Awards (with a total value of €21,300) to young researchers on sports science during the annual congress of the European College of Sport Science. There were 139 entrants for the Awards, which were judged by an Independent Scientific Committee of 13 European experts (1011).

The **Diabetes Prevention Forum** is a group of European experts, bringing together doctors, nurses and members of associations representing people with diabetes. The main action undertaken in 2007 was continuing the work of the Forum whilst re-branding it from its previous incarnation as the “Gluco-Forum”. More than 450 people registered for further information on the Forum at four conferences in 2007 (640).

2.5.3 Research: Summary and broader context

Research contributes to the Platform’s aims by advancing medical knowledge on the health conditions affecting Europe, which can lead to techniques to alleviate disease and premature death. Research also informs the evidence base to help policy-makers and officials make effective decisions to improve the health of Europe. Research can also help

to identify and disseminate best practices in many different areas connected to diet, physical activity and health, thus informing the actions of relevant stakeholders.

In 2007, the research undertaken by (or funded by) Platform members included an epidemiological study of the health status of a population, consumer behaviour, food consumption patterns, communication practices and product reformulation. There is evidence that some of these projects have had impacts in their relative fields, whether through peer-reviewed publications, conference presentation or other dissemination mechanisms. In addition, there are indications that the ongoing research projects will produce valuable findings when they come to fruition.

When monitoring research activities, it is useful if funding figures can be provided to communicate the scale of the project, along with a clear timescale for outputs and details of any such outputs, particularly if they have reached decision-makers or passed peer review.

CHAPTER 3 **An overview of the Platform commitments**

3.1 **Mapping of Commitments**

The RAND Europe team created a geographical scale of the level at which commitments are active, which was then combined with the policy area in which commitments are active (e.g. labelling or reformulation) in order to provide a clear overview of Platform commitments.

The geographical scale consists of 7 levels, where the numbers 1 to 7 correspond to a different geographical coverage as listed in Table 3.1. Level 7 is separate in the sense that commitments at this level are not directly bound to any specific countries and operate at a trans-European level covering all of the Member States.

Level	Geographical Coverage
1	Local
2	One Member State
3	Two Member States
4	Three Member States
5	Four Member States
6	Five or more Member States
7	Trans-European

Table 3.1: Levels of geographical coverage

To generate the map of commitments it is not only necessary to score them according to their geographical coverage; commitments also need to be categorised according to the actual action undertaken. As a significant part of the commitments undertake actions that fit various categories, the decision was made to split actions and count them in all the categories in which they undertake substantive action. Thus certain commitments are represented in the map more than once in order to provide a clear overview of the areas in which Platform members are active. Figure 1 provides an overview of the number of commitments undertaken in the various areas.

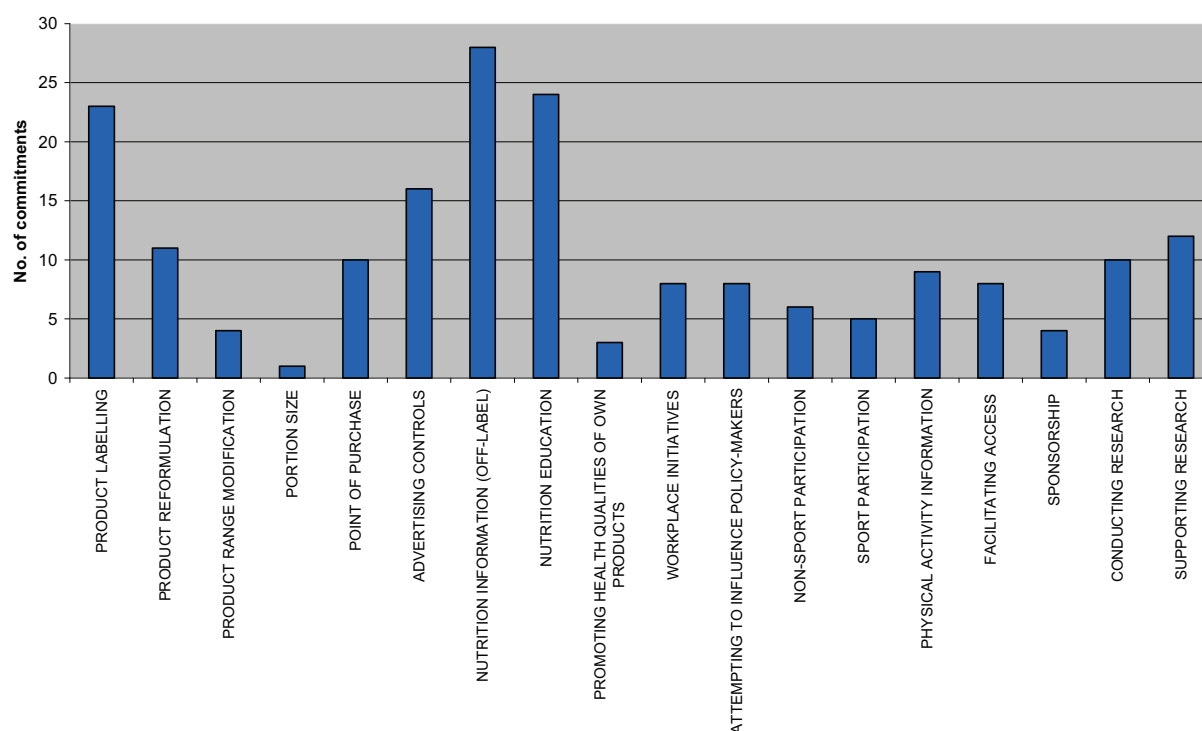


Figure 3.1: Number of commitments per area

In addition, RAND wished to create a visual overview of the type and location of Platform activities. The following map illustrates levels of activity across the action categories and levels of geographic coverage through colour coding. Darker cells indicate higher levels of activity, while lighter cells indicate lower levels of activity. The geographical levels of 3, 4 and 5 have been merged because only two commitments fell in levels 3 and 4, and no commitments in level 5. A larger version of this map is given in Appendix A.

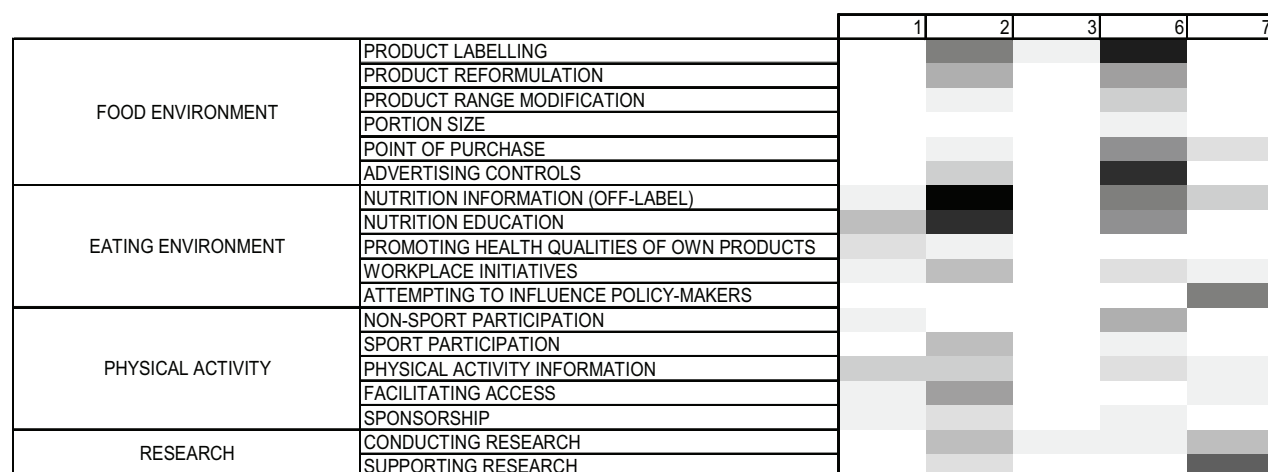


Figure 3.2: Map of commitments

The map clearly indicates a high density of activities taking place at both the national and multi-country international level, that is, being executed either in one Member State or in five or more Member States. Furthermore, trans-European commitments tend to focus on

highly specific activities such as research and influencing policy-making. Looking at the type of activities, it becomes clear a large share of commitments focus on the food and eating environment, and far fewer commitments are occupied with physical activity. Within the food environment most commitments appear to be active in labelling and the control of advertising, while nutrition information and education are most prominent amongst commitments in the eating environment.

On a more general level it seems that commitments within the food environment tend to be undertaken at an international level, possibly reflecting the international scope of the members in this area, which are to a large extent food-producing companies. In contrast, a plurality of commitments in the eating environment appear to take place at the national level, which could again reflect the members undertaking these commitments, but also the type of activities that are being undertaken. For example, education and information, the most prominent categories in the eating environment, are typically actions conducted on a national scale in one language. Finally, research and commitments aimed to influence policy-makers are almost exclusively undertaken at the trans-European level.

3.2 Conclusion

The nineteen sections above illustrate the considerable range of activities associated with the Platform in 2007. These activities include: measures to improve the labelling of food products; schemes to reformulate food products; initiatives to modify the range of products available and their portion sizes; activities to address advertising and marketing; attempts to educate and inform European citizens about nutrition and physical activity in general and the health qualities of particular products; changing food consumption patterns at the point of purchase; implementing workplace-based programmes to improve healthy lifestyles; attempts to influence policy-makers; projects to promote participation in sport and non-sport physical activities; programmes to facilitate access to sports activities; sponsoring sports teams and events; and conducting and supporting research. In terms of crude numbers, the areas of nutrition education and information, product labelling and advertising controls have been covered by the most commitments, with relatively few commitments addressing the physical activity sector. With regards to geographic coverage, most commitments took place in a single Member State or across five or more Member States.

The range of these activities continues to be impressive, but care must be taken with any interpretation of the findings because the monitoring and communication of these activities is sometimes incomplete or poorly articulated. As the preceding paragraph indicates, members of the Platform have responded to the aims of the Platform with a diverse range of activities and achievements. Many of these create the opportunity for efficiency and economy by being linked closely with the existing strengths and activities of the Platform member implementing them. As an alternative mechanism for pursuing public benefits through innovative actions, the Platform continues to raise important questions. Such innovative mechanisms present new advantages and limitations, which are likely to become better understood over time.

CHAPTER 4 **Aspects of monitoring that are relevant to the Platform**

4.1 Introduction

The main purpose of this chapter is to highlight areas of monitoring practice that are particularly important or relevant to the Platform. RAND Europe identified these areas by applying its own knowledge about monitoring to the 148 monitoring forms it received. In order to understand these areas fully, the chapter first provides a brief explanation of monitoring. This information was also included in the Second Monitoring Progress Report.

4.2 The nature of monitoring

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) provides a useful definition of monitoring. It states that monitoring is:

“A continuous function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an on-going development intervention with indicators of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds.”⁷⁸

To be effective, monitoring information should be specific in terms of quantity and time; be clearly communicated to its intended audience; be focused on data that really matter rather than on trivial details; and use metrics that measure what they claim to measure and avoid being spurious. “Monitoring” should be distinguished from “evaluation”. An evaluation would usually draw upon monitoring data, but it is concerned primarily with making an objective judgement about the design, impact, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the activity or intervention. It is worth emphasising that this Monitoring Progress Report is concerned with the monitoring of the Platform and not its evaluation.

⁷⁸ OECD (2002) ‘Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results-Based Management’. Paris: OECD/DAC.

4.3 Aspects of monitoring that are relevant to the Platform

As the previous section makes clear, there has been a considerable amount of recent activity that attempts to apply the principles of monitoring to Platform activities. This section outlines five aspects of monitoring that RAND Europe identified as being particularly relevant to the Platform. These five aspects have been retained from the Second Monitoring Progress report, produced in 2007.

4.3.1 Specificity

In order to make an objective “monitoring-friendly”, members need to connect it to specific actions and a specific time frame. It is necessary to identify what is meant by each word and what the objective entails on a practical, measurable level, so that all possible ambiguity is eliminated. For example, if a form simply states that leaflets will be used to disseminate health information, then the person monitoring cannot know necessary details such as how many leaflets will be produced in a particular time frame, or whether the Platform member considers this to be a sufficient number to have the desired effect.

Our consideration of the monitoring forms in 2007 revealed that individual objectives were often far too vague and poorly separated from overall general goals. To improve monitoring, the forms should state how specific actions link to general outcomes. One specific problem often encountered was the lack of a timescale attached to an objective. This makes monitoring particularly problematic, since it is difficult to assess when things are going to plan and when they are behind schedule.

Naturally, some commitments concern objectives that are intrinsically problematic to quantify because they deal with intangible forces, such as influence. However, Platform members need to ensure that they monitor the measurable aspects of their commitments. One possible way of doing this is to reduce actions down to a practical level at which they are specific enough to be measurable.

4.3.2 Focus

An important issue that came to our attention was the need to include an appropriate level of information in the monitoring forms. Often we encountered forms that did not include information that was vital to helping us comprehend the action at hand, such as the definition of terms that were specific to the commitment. For example, one form stated the cost and timescale of a programme but not what the programme actually entailed. On the other hand, sometimes we encountered forms that contained a great deal of general information that was irrelevant to the actual commitment being monitored. Often this took the form of statements about the Platform member’s general activities or strategic goals. The significant facts were often “hidden” amongst this extraneous information, and sometimes it took a considerable amount of time to locate them.

4.3.3 Measurement

The way in which results are measured is clearly a crucial aspect of monitoring. It is naturally very important to include quantitative data if possible, but these data should be treated in an appropriate manner. Although most of the monitoring forms included at least some quantitative information, far fewer forms included contextual information that made these figures meaningful. For example, it is difficult to assess the significance of a 40%

market share if the size and value of the market is not stated. This suggests that figures alone cannot allow the scale of commitments to be monitored and appreciated: contextual information is needed as well. Similarly, it aids the monitoring process if forms can include figures that show how progress has been achieved over time.

RAND Europe did have concerns that some of the costs included in certain forms might be spurious. This generally occurred in those instances when a single Platform member submitted forms for many different commitments that all had identical costs. Occasionally, we also had some concerns that the results presented in monitoring forms might be of questionable reliability. One of the most common examples of this was when survey results were presented without any indication of the number of responses on which these results were based. In such instances, we have included the results on the assumption that the number of responses is sufficient for the results to be meaningful.

4.3.4 Clarity

The monitoring forms should communicate their information as clearly as possible. Monitoring forms should display clear links between objectives, inputs, outputs and outcomes (if present), and an objective should be linked to at least one output. If such linkages are not established, attempts to monitor the commitment will encounter difficulties. This is particularly true if vague objectives are poorly linked to specific actions. To help comprehend this point, it may be helpful to view objectives without a corresponding output as “not proven”, and outputs without a corresponding objective as “irrelevant or of unclear significance”. To aid such linkages, therefore, each action should be carefully separated out into the appropriate “inputs”, “processes” and “outputs” sections in the monitoring form template.

Certain commitments may be difficult to monitor because they contain many different actions. In these cases it might be advisable to divide the commitment into multiple commitments with more specific objectives that would be easier to monitor accurately. As a general rule, it is sensible to have one action per commitment, if this is possible.

4.3.5 Resource issues

Finally, some Platform members engaged external parties to participate in the monitoring of their commitments. It seems evident to us that engaging a separate organisation that can offer expertise in the field of monitoring is a potentially beneficial step to take. However, this is just another example of the crucial point that monitoring requires dedicated resources in order to function properly. These resources need not necessarily take the form of money paid to external assessors: they might take the form of time commitments made by skilled people employed by Platform members. The hiring of external assessors may indicate that the Platform member in question is focused on ensuring that their commitment(s) are monitored appropriately, but this is not necessarily the case. Another member could produce equally good results through diligent application of principles such as the setting of realistic targets, the clear-eyed tracking of inputs, and the accurate measurement of outputs.

4.3.6 Summary

During RAND Europe’s engagement with the EU Platform, the most useful forms have been those with clearly defined, time-limited objectives that were directly linked to

corresponding, clearly measured outputs. Many of the forms we studied had all or some of these characteristics. It was clear that some Platform members have put in great effort to create monitoring practices, and have made impressive progress as a result. On the other hand, some monitoring reports seem to display little enthusiasm. Whilst it is obvious that resources need to be committed to engage in monitoring, and although the technical challenges to effective monitoring should not be underestimated, we would like to suggest that the adoption of better monitoring practices is not necessarily a large or difficult undertaking. As recommended in 2007, the first step is to adopt a “monitoring mindset” that understands what information is required for successful monitoring.

5.1 **Introduction**

In order to measure more precisely the standard of monitoring that is being undertaken by the Platform members, RAND Europe created a process to assess quantitatively the quality of the monitoring forms. This chapter describes that process and presents the results it produced.

The purpose of this quality assessment exercise was to give an overview of the quality of the monitoring forms. Although we have attempted to approach this task in a rigorous manner, the act of judging the quality of a monitoring form retains an element of subjectivity. The results of this quality assessment exercise should be approached with these caveats in mind; nevertheless, we believe that it offers a useful indication of the state of Platform members' monitoring practices. We wish to emphasise that this assessment is concerned solely with the quality of the monitoring of a commitment – it does not make any judgement on the commitment itself or its relevance to the Platform's aims.

5.2 **Methodology**

5.2.1 **Creating the quality categories and the scoring system**

In order to measure more precisely the standard of monitoring that is being undertaken by the Platform members, in 2007 RAND Europe created a process to assess quantitatively the quality of the monitoring forms. In doing so, the RAND Europe team attempted to identify the criteria that would allow the forms' monitoring quality to be judged most accurately. After a process of reflection and consolidation, four categories were agreed upon: specificity, clarity, focus, and measurement. These categories reflect the aspects of monitoring relevant to the Platform that were identified in Chapter 4.

The next stage was to develop a scoring system for these categories. The RAND Europe team's previous work in the field of quality assessment suggested that a rating system from one to five provided a scale that offered detailed results without being overly complicated. Criteria were then defined for each of the scores from one to five. Sections 5.2.2 to 5.2.5 describe each of the four categories and provide the criteria for each score level.

The scoring process for 2007 commitments is largely similar to that for 2006 ones, in order to secure consistency and allow for temporal comparisons. However, several

differences do exist in this year's scoring exercise compared to last year, which could influence the scoring of commitments. The first difference stems from the introduction of the new monitoring form, which contains more information about commitments due to the space allocated to descriptions and small summaries. Thus, the scoring exercise will reflect the quality of a different form this year and cover more information about commitments than that of the previous year. Secondly, the category "measurement" this year has an extended focus. Similarly to the previous scoring exercise, the weight in measurement lies on the documentation and quantification of results; however, in addition to results, attention has also been paid to the quantification of inputs this year. Scores in the measurement category will therefore also reflect a wider range of information this year.

A final note can be made regarding the overall focus of scoring and quality assessment of the monitoring forms. The RAND Europe team has chosen to focus on possibilities to monitor rather than information provision *per se*. This means that rather than assessing the mere quantity of data available the team has made an attempt to understand how well a commitment has been monitored given the possibilities to measure. Thus if it appears all has been done to monitor a commitment well this would deserve a high scoring, even if the amount of information and data is limited.

5.2.2 Specificity

The "Specificity" category concerns how well the monitoring form makes its objectives specific –in terms of both quantity and time. Does the form state exactly what the commitment aims to do, how it will be done, and by when its actions will be accomplished? Does the form separate specific objectives from the member's general, overarching aims?⁷⁹

Scoring categories

- | | |
|---|--|
| 5 | The form displays an excellent level of specificity. The objectives are comprehensively defined and address most of the points given in the appropriate section of the Monitoring Framework. No questions arise regarding the exact objectives, targets and actions to be undertaken. There is a full range of quantitative targets and target dates. |
| 4 | The form offers a good level of specificity. Objectives are given parameters that greatly reduce (but do not eliminate) ambiguity about the exact scope of the commitment. Each of the terms involved in the objectives have been defined adequately, but some uncertainties remain. Objectives contribute to wider goals without being confused with these wider goals. Quantitative targets and target dates are adequate. |
| 3 | The form has reached an adequate level of specificity. Objectives are specific enough to be satisfactory, but some aspects are still unclear. The objectives may |

⁷⁹ The issue of specificity is dealt with further in the Platform Monitoring Framework. http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/nutrition/platform/docs/eu_platform_monitoring_framework_en.pdf

not be fully separated from larger, overarching goals. There has been an attempt to define the exact meaning of some of the terms involved in the objective. There are some quantitative targets, but these are ill-defined or do not cover all the objectives. There is an attempt to give the commitment a timescale.

- 2 The form's level of specificity is poor. Objectives are vague and poorly separated from larger, overarching goals. There has been no attempt to define the exact meaning of the terms involved in the objective. Objectives are rarely given quantitative targets and if such targets are included, they are limited and ill-defined. A timescale may be referred to briefly, but no specific dates are stated.
- 1 The form is very poor with regard to specificity. Objectives are extremely vague or totally generic. Hardly any achievable goals are stated. The actual scope of the commitment is unidentifiable because it is surrounded by general aims and goals. No timescale is stated.

5.2.3 Clarity

The "Clarity" category deals with the monitoring form's success in communicating "what the commitment is about". Put simply, does the monitoring form allow the reader to fully understand the commitment? Does the form offer clear links between objectives, inputs, outputs and outcomes (if the latter are present)? Does the form give a plausible account of why, or why not, certain effects should be attributed to the commitment's actions?⁸⁰

Scoring categories

- 5 Excellent communication of the commitment. Each element of the commitment has clear links between inputs, processes and outputs. The monitoring form has given convincing explanation of which effects can be attributed to its actions, and why this is the case.
- 4 Good communication of commitment, although some ambiguities remain. There is some linking between sections, but it is not fully developed. The form refers to attribution issues, but not to a full extent or in a convincing manner.
- 3 Adequate communication of commitment. With some effort, it is possible to understand fully what has happened. Information is provided clearly, but linking is very limited or nonexistent. No mention of attribution issues.
- 2 Poor communication of commitment. It is not possible to understand fully what has happened, even with effort. Information is often unclear or not integrated with other sections. No mention of attribution issues.
- 1 Very poor communication of commitment, displaying major incoherence. Information is often incomprehensible, or simply absent. No mention of

⁸⁰ This aspect is more applicable to those commitments which mention outcomes as well as outputs.

attribution issues. Very little content can be used for monitoring.

5.2.4 Focus

The “Focus” category refers to the extent that the form provides an appropriate level of information to allow effective monitoring. Does the form exclude trivia and ensure that crucial information is present? Does it provide necessary contextual information to enable the reader to judge the scale of a commitment’s impacts?

Scoring categories

- 5 The form has an excellent level of focus. It is tightly focused and provides the maximum amount of relevant information in the minimum amount of space. No irrelevant details are included. Outputs are provided with full and appropriate contextual information that allows readers to accurately assess the scale of the commitment’s effects.
- 4 The form has a good level of focus. It is focused on communicating specific details of the commitment, although irrelevant details are included very occasionally. It appears that no useful information has been omitted. Outputs are provided with adequate contextual information that allows a reader to understand the scale of a commitment’s effects. The writer seems to have understood the appropriate level of detail required for the monitoring forms.
- 3 The form has an adequate level of focus. It includes useful details that aid the understanding of the commitment. However, it also either contains rather more information than is needed to understand the commitment and its context, or omits certain useful information. Nevertheless, these omissions or superfluities do not create serious difficulties in interpreting the form. Outputs are provided with some contextual information, although this does not give the “full picture” and therefore the effects cannot be placed fully in context.
- 2 The form is poorly focused. It contains large sections of information that are irrelevant to the objectives and the commitment, or there is a significant amount of necessary information missing. This makes interpreting the form very difficult and time-consuming, since the reader has to assess the relevance of the included sections, or is prevented from understanding certain statements fully. Outputs usually are presented with very little or no information that might help to illustrate their scale.
- 1 The form is very poorly focused. It is little more than a “dumping ground” for heterogeneous information and statements. It appears that the writer has not understood the basic purpose of monitoring. No useful contextual information is included, but there may be many “marketing-type” statements.

5.2.5 Measurement

The “Measurement” category concerns the extent to which a form measures the commitment’s results appropriately and frames those results in an understandable manner. Does the form include quantitative data, if appropriate? Does the form state for what period the results apply? Have the actions be measured at appropriate intervals? Is there a solid basis for being confident in the data, or are they possibly spurious? Have appropriate resources (of whatever form) been dedicated to measuring the commitment’s results?⁸¹

Scoring categories

- | | |
|---|--|
| 5 | The monitoring form indicates excellent measurement of the commitment. It provides extensive quantitative and qualitative data that have been measured using techniques that are wholly appropriate. The period to which the data refer is clearly specified. The monitoring form provides a solid basis for the reader to be confident in the information presented. All the activities are measured at (or by) appropriate intervals for the type of commitment and the type of data concerned. The level of resources allocated means that the commitment’s results can be measured comprehensively and reliably. |
| 4 | The monitoring form displays good measurement of the commitment. It provides a range of quantitative and qualitative data. These data seem to have been measured appropriately. The form provides information that supports the view that the data are reliable. Some of the activities have been assigned appropriate measurement intervals. Substantial resources, relative to the scale of the commitment, have been allocated to measuring results. |
| 3 | The monitoring form indicates adequate measurement of the commitment. Some quantitative data are provided, and the period to which these data refer is indicated. The system of measurement is appropriate overall, although it may contain some inappropriate elements. On the whole, it appears that the data is reliable. There is some understanding of appropriate intervals to measure certain activities. Sufficient resources have been allocated to allow the commitment’s results to be measured adequately. |
| 2 | The monitoring form displays poor measurement of the commitment. It provides very little quantitative data. There are some indications as to the period to which this information refers, but they are ambiguous. There are indications that the data are spurious or unreliable. There is no evidence of understanding of what is an appropriate measurement interval. The Platform member has dedicated some resources to support monitoring, but these fall short of adequate standards. |
| 1 | The monitoring form displays very poor measurement of the commitment. Extremely limited or no quantitative data are provided. When they are, they |

⁸¹ It will be noted that the scoring for this category privileges quantitative data over qualitative data. The rationale for this is that quantitative results are often clearer, more accountable and more compelling to non-Platform members than qualitative results, although this is not always the case.

are usually inappropriate and there is no indication of the period to which they refer. There are serious indications that the data are spurious or unreliable. There is no evidence of understanding of what is an appropriate measurement interval. It appears that very few or no resources have been allocated to produce accurate and reliable measurements.

5.2.6 Multiple actions included in the same monitoring form

One of the problems we encountered in dealing with the monitoring forms was that sometimes many actions were included in the same form. However, this was not a significant problem if all the actions were separated out clearly, and so we have not explicitly included this criterion in the categories. Nevertheless, it is much preferable to make the objective of the commitment as specific as possible in order to reduce the number of actions it involves.

5.2.7 Applying the scoring system

As noted above, 148 monitoring forms are analysed in this Third Monitoring Progress Report. Each form was read in turn and given a score for each of the categories above.⁸² To do this, we considered the “Specificity” category first, and compared the monitoring form against the criteria for score levels in that category (as defined above). We judged whether each of the statements contained in the score levels was true for the monitoring form in question. For example, we considered whether the statement “There has been an attempt to define the exact meaning of some of the terms involved in the objective” was true of the monitoring form. If so, then this suggested that a score of 3 was appropriate. If not, we tested which of the statements from the other score levels appeared to be true. Once we had done this for all the statements from the Specificity category, we judged what seemed to be an appropriate score for this category. This is the stage where the element of subjectivity is strongest. If all the statements we assigned to a form come from the same score level, (“3”, for example), then clearly it is appropriate to assign that score for Specificity. However, it is likely that some of the statements will suggest that the form should be given a “4” score (for example) for Specificity, while others will indicate that a “2” score is appropriate. Therefore, the score that is awarded may be something of an “average” representation of a monitoring form’s performance in a particular category.

This task was performed by a single analyst who had already read all of the monitoring forms during the preceding month. A selection of the scores produced by this analyst were quality assured by two other analysts. For each monitoring form, an average (mean) score was calculated from the scores awarded in each assessment category. These individual averages were then used to create an overall average score for all 148 monitoring forms.

5.3 Results

The overall average (mean) quality score for the 148 monitoring forms was 3.00 out of a possible 5.00. This is slightly higher than the 2.88 overall average of the previous year.

⁸² In some cases, the “measurement” category was not appropriate (often because results were forthcoming). In this case, the category was given a score of “not applicable”.

However, comparisons should be made with care – an issue to be addressed later. To aid the interpretation of this result, we offer a broad guide to what an average monitoring form score signifies.

Score	Meaning
5	Excellent
4	Good
3	Adequate
2	Poor
1	Very poor

Table 5.1: Suggested definitions of average monitoring form quality scores

We wish to point out that these terms are extremely crude and do not provide a full accurate measurement index. They are provided purely as a rough “rule-of-thumb” guide. On the basis of this (possibly spurious) scale, the average quality score of the monitoring forms that were assessed just met the “Adequate” level.

The distribution of the quality scores is shown in Figure 5.1 and Table 5.2.

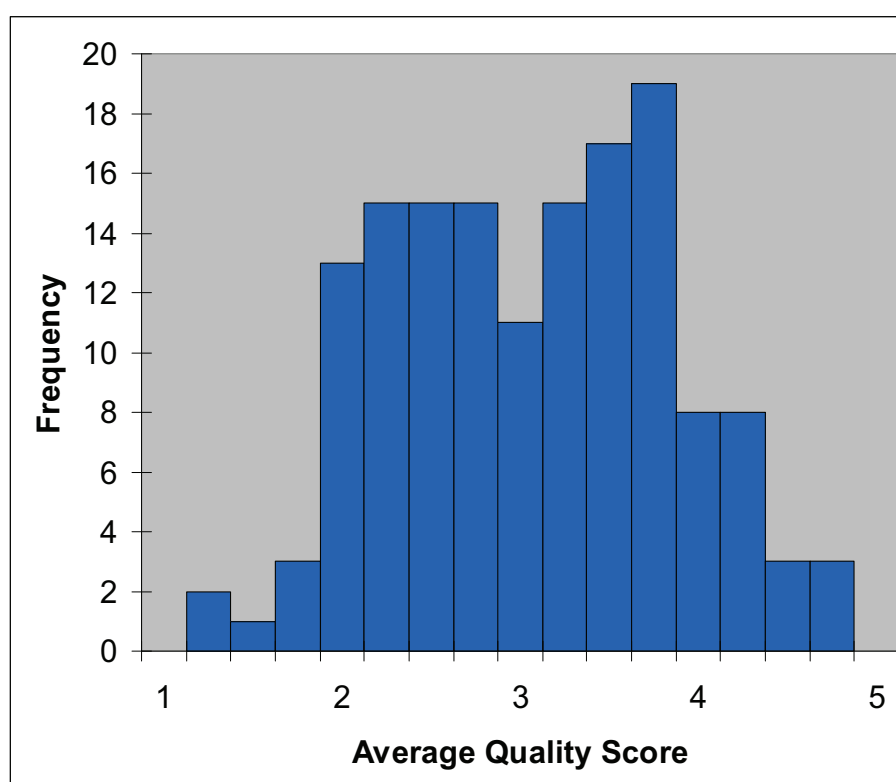


Figure 5.1: Distribution of average monitoring form quality scores

Quality score	Percentage of total results	Quality score	Cumulative percentage of total results
1 < 2	10.1%	< 2	10.1%
2 < 3	36.5%	< 3	46.6%
3 < 4	41.2%	< 4	87.8%
4 < 5	12.2%	≤ 5	100%

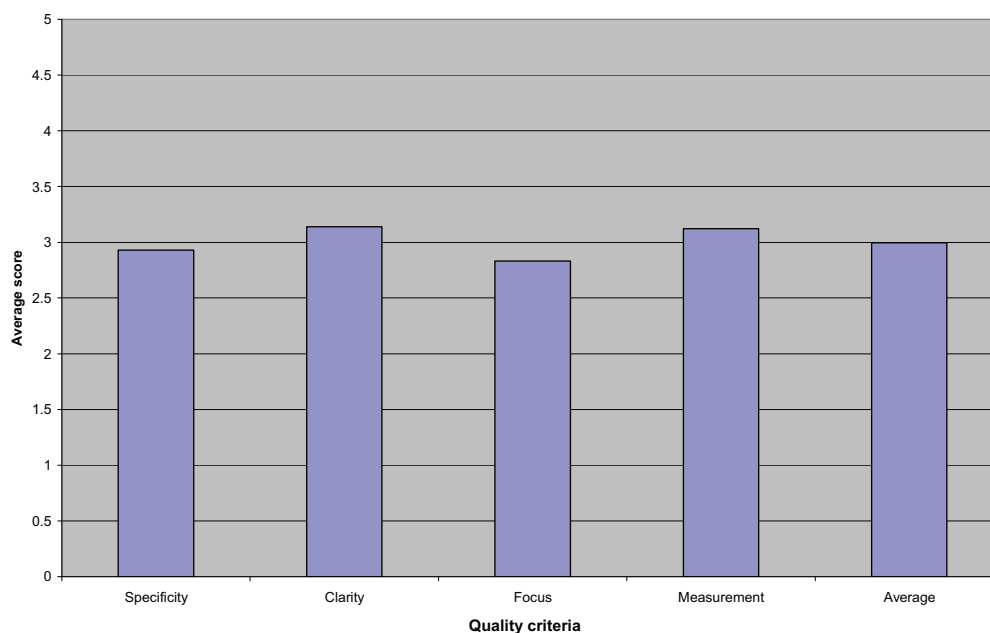
Table 5.2: Distribution and cumulative frequency distribution of average monitoring form quality scores (n = 148)

The two left-hand columns show that, for example, 10.1% of the reports scored less than 2, while 36.5% of the monitoring forms received a score that was equal to or greater than 2, but less than 3. It is noticeable that less than 13% of the forms gained a score of 4 (“Good”) or above on average. An interesting fact provided by the right-hand two columns is that 53.4% of the forms received an average score equal to, or higher than, 3 (“Adequate”).

As noted above, the mean quality score for the monitoring forms was 3.00. However, to provide an overall average disguises variations between the various assessment categories, as demonstrated in Table 5.3 and Figure 5.2.

Assessment category	Mean score	Standard deviation ⁸³
Overall average	3.00	0.79
Specificity	2.93	1.04
Clarity	3.14	0.90
Focus	2.83	0.91
Measurement	3.12	0.96

⁸³ Standard deviation concerns the spread of a particular set of results. This is a factor that may be disguised by the mean average. For example, a set of results scoring 1, 1, 5 and 5 would clearly suggest different conclusions about the state of monitoring from a set that scores 3, 3, 3, and 3 – but both sets produce the same mean average (3). In basic terms, standard deviation is the “average” amount by which all the scores deviate from the mean score.

Table 5.3: Mean scores of monitoring form quality scores, by assessment category**Figure 5.2: Average monitoring form quality scores by assessment category**

Disaggregating the scores by assessment category provides a more comprehensive overview of the quality of the commitments. It appears that the forms performed far less well on the Focus criterion and appeared to score best on Clarity and Measurement. One possible explanation of this result is that some Platform members are not entirely sure of the required or appropriate level of detail that should be included in the monitoring forms. The experience of the RAND Europe team in assessing the commitments accords with this explanation, as we often had to read a form repeatedly to identify the relevant information. At other times monitoring forms omit vital information that would have aided our understanding greatly. On the other hand, the forms recorded noticeably higher scores for the Measurement and Clarity criteria. This underlines the team's view that many of the members place greatest importance on reporting results, which are often clearly stated and supported by data. In contrast, the other elements of completing the form (formulating objectives, communicating clearly, selecting appropriate information) appear to have presented greater challenges.

One other potentially illuminating method of analysis is to study how quality scores vary according to the different types of activities undertaken by Platform members. In order to do this, the RAND Europe team disaggregated the scores for each of the 19 subcategories outlined in Table 2.1. The results of this disaggregation are presented in Table 5.4, ordered by descending average quality score.

Selection	Mean quality score	Number of scores	Standard Deviation
Product reformulation	3.5	11	0.536
Advertising controls	3.5	16	0.78
Sport participation	3.48	5	0.311
Supporting research	3.15	12	0.644
Product labelling	3.14	23	0.745
Promoting health qualities of own products	3.00	3	0.661
Workplace initiatives	3.00	8	1.104
Facilitating access	3.00	8	0.713
Conducting research	2.96	10	0.95
Product range modification	2.91	4	0.909
Nutrition education	2.89	24	0.782
Point of purchase	2.75	10	1.012
Nutrition information (off-label)	2.72	28	0.735
Promoting physical activity	2.71	9	0.707
Portion size	2.63	1	.
Attempting to influence policy-makers	2.61	8	0.88
Non-sport participation	2.46	6	0.431
Sponsorship	2.44	4	0.462

Table 5.4: Mean monitoring quality scores, by area of Platform activity

Perhaps unsurprisingly, drawing conclusions from such a table of figures is beset by difficulties. It is problematic to compare between data sets that vary greatly in size (from 1 data point to 28, for example), and a mean average gives a rather crude representation of the full range of scores, particularly if the standard deviation of the set is large. With these caveats in mind, it does appear that the monitoring of product reformulation commitments, advertising controls and sport participation has reached a relatively high standard. Without more detailed research, attempts to understand these results will remain informed speculation, and the following comments should be read in this spirit. One possible explanation for the high score of product reformulation is that the quality scoring mechanism may privilege the provision of quantitative information, which was often present in product reformulation monitoring terms – of tonnes of salt removed from products, and so on. Similarly, the clarity of these forms may have been aided by the fact that many actions followed the template “to reduce the amount of x in x”, which is easily understood. Similarly, many of the advertising controls commitments concerned different aspects of the self-regulatory organisation system, which aided the development of specific and consistent targets. The large difference between the relatively high score given to sport participation and the relatively low score given to non-sport participation is more puzzling. Both categories involve similar numbers of commitments and a similar standard deviation, and logically one would assume that their activities are similar. Nevertheless, given the very small sample sizes that are being analysed, it is possible that these differences are merely coincidental and would disappear if a larger population were considered.

5.4 Comparison with 2007

Comparisons with the scoring of the previous monitoring report are not straightforward. Simply comparing the means of both scoring exercises generates a picture that is interesting yet incomplete. In the first instance, comparisons are complicated by the fact that the current scoring averages are based on 148 commitments as opposed to 121 commitments in the previous year. Furthermore, since the Second Monitoring Progress Report in 2007, several commitments have ended, while others have started. In total, 70 commitments have continued in the last year and have been included in both the previous as well as the current scoring exercise. Hence, the current scoring is also based on 78 new commitments, while 50 commitments have finished. The separation into continuing and new commitments is helpful as it allows comparisons to be made more accurately.

A comparison between this year's scoring of continuing commitments and that of the previous year is shown in Table 5.4 and indicates that overall scoring improved for all categories. Figures for the new commitments further underline the general findings that commitments tend to score higher on measurement and clarity than on specificity and focus. The improvements in these categories for the continuing commitments might be seen as an indication of learning taking place during Platform membership.

Selection	Specificity	Clarity	Focus	Measurement	Average
Continuing commitments – 2007 scores	3.05	3.13	2.97	3.35	3.12
Continuing commitments – 2008 scores	3.35	3.34	3.14	3.42	3.31
New commitments	2.56	2.97	2.57	2.84	2.70
Finished commitments	2.51	2.47	2.44	2.61	2.51

Table 5.5: Mean monitoring form quality scores for different selections

5.5 Summary

RAND Europe has developed a process for assessing the quality of monitoring forms that uses a scoring mechanism to quantify quality levels. The process has been applied twice now, for 148 monitoring forms in 2008 and 121 monitoring forms in 2007. The results indicate that the average (mean) quality score of the current monitoring forms is 3.00. Overall this score suggests that the monitoring forms just meet an “Adequate” level, and in general seem to have slightly improved since last year. These averages do, however, conceal many variations between different categories, as well as between different selections of commitments (for example, new and continuing commitments). Interpretations of the scoring exercise should therefore be made with care and with reference to the appropriate category, as well as to the selection of commitments concerned.

This report illustrates the considerable range of activities associated with the Platform in 2007. These activities include: measures to improve the labelling of food products; schemes to reformulate food products; initiatives to modify the range of products available and their portion sizes; activities to address advertising and marketing; attempts to educate and inform European citizens about nutrition and physical activity in general and the health qualities of particular products; changing food consumption patterns at the point of purchase; implementing workplace based programmes to improve healthy lifestyles; attempts to influence policy-makers; projects to promote participation in sport and non-sport physical activities; programmes to facilitate access to sports activities; sponsoring sports teams and events; and conducting and supporting research. In terms of crude numbers, the areas of nutrition education and information, product labelling and advertising controls have been covered by the most commitments, with relatively few commitments addressing the physical activity sector.

All of the achievements listed in this Monitoring Report were provided by Platform members. We have attempted to include information on all of these activities, except where the specificity, clarity, focus, or measurement was so poor that it was not possible to communicate them in a meaningful way, or when the actions were not applicable to 2007. It should be noted that the inclusion of statements based on this information in the Monitoring Progress Report does not mean that the RAND Europe team has independently verified such statements. Nor does it mean that the problem of attribution (“Was it really the Platform that caused the achievements to happen?”) has been overcome.

This Monitoring Progress Report also charts progress towards developing a comprehensive and persuasive set of monitoring practices. This Monitoring Progress Report has analysed the monitoring methods used and commented particularly on the criteria of specificity, clarity, focus and measurement. These criteria were applied to the monitoring forms received in an attempt to assess the quality of these forms through a scoring mechanism. The ensuing scores represent an honest, fair, transparent and independent judgement on our part. Nevertheless, they should be regarded as a structured judgement.

The mean quality score awarded, out of a possible 5.00, was 3.00, which is a slight improvement from the mean score of 2.88 in 2007. This score of 3.00 means that the spurious “average” monitoring form just met an “Adequate” standard where: objectives are sufficiently clear to be understood, and include some quantitative targets and timescales; reporting allows, with some effort, an understanding of what has been done; there is a

focus on many important activities whilst less attention is paid to more trivial activities; and, on balance, there is an approach to measurement that is appropriate if not complete.

It is noticeable that scores for new commitments were lower than for those commitments that continued from 2006 to 2007; the scores for these continuing commitments increased from last year's scoring exercise, which may suggest that a learning process is taking place with regards to monitoring as a result of Platform membership. However, these averages conceal many variations between different categories, as well as between different selections of commitments (for example, new and continuing commitments). For example, there were variations within the different categories used to carry out the quality assessment: commitments tend to score higher on measurement and clarity than on specificity and focus. Interpretations of the scoring exercise should therefore be made with care and with reference to the appropriate category, as well as to the selection of commitments concerned.

Like its predecessor, this Monitoring Progress Report shows that the Platform can point to a wide range of activities and achievements that reflect the diverse capacities of the Platform members. Again, a plausible case can be made for linking these claimed achievements to a successful delivery of the aims of the Platform. In addition, this Monitoring Progress Report also suggests that Platform members continue to develop a range of skills in producing monitoring data, although the picture is complicated by the fact that the Platform's membership is continually in flux. However, it is clear that significant variations in the quality of reports remain, and that some Platform members are struggling with the monitoring of their commitments.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Map of commitments

		1	2	3	6	7
FOOD ENVIRONMENT	PRODUCT LABELLING					
	PRODUCT REFORMULATION					
	PRODUCT RANGE MODIFICATION					
	PORTION SIZE					
	POINT OF PURCHASE					
	ADVERTISING CONTROLS					
EATING ENVIRONMENT	NUTRITION INFORMATION (OFF-LABEL)					
	NUTRITION EDUCATION					
	PROMOTING HEALTH QUALITIES OF OWN PRODUCTS					
	WORKPLACE INITIATIVES					
	ATTEMPTING TO INFLUENCE POLICY-MAKERS					
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY	NON-SPORT PARTICIPATION					
	SPORT PARTICIPATION					
	PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INFORMATION					
	FACILITATING ACCESS					
	SPONSORSHIP					
RESEARCH	CONDUCTING RESEARCH					
	SUPPORTING RESEARCH					