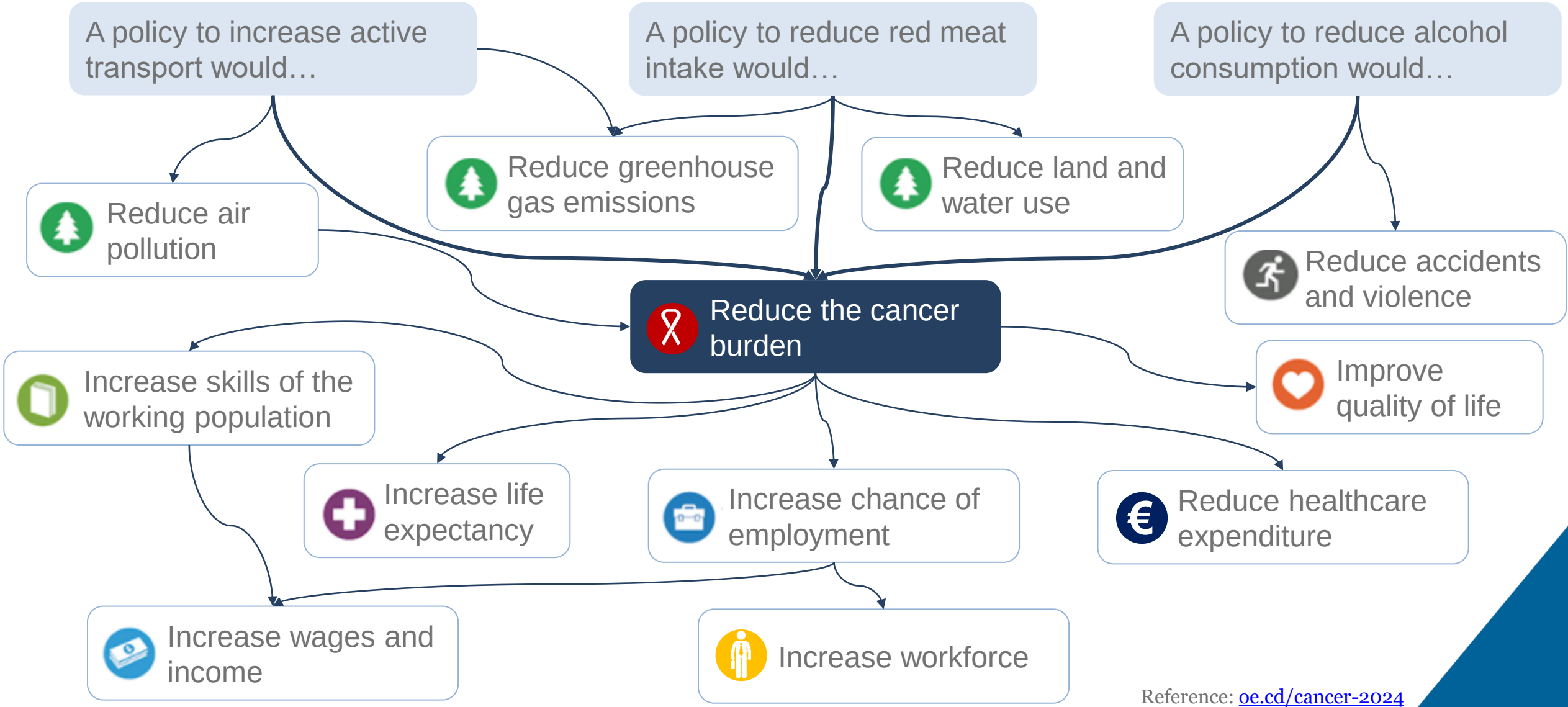
FROM BURDEN TO POLICY: EXPERIENCES IN POLICY EVALUATION AT OECD

Michele Cecchini
Head of Public Health
OECD

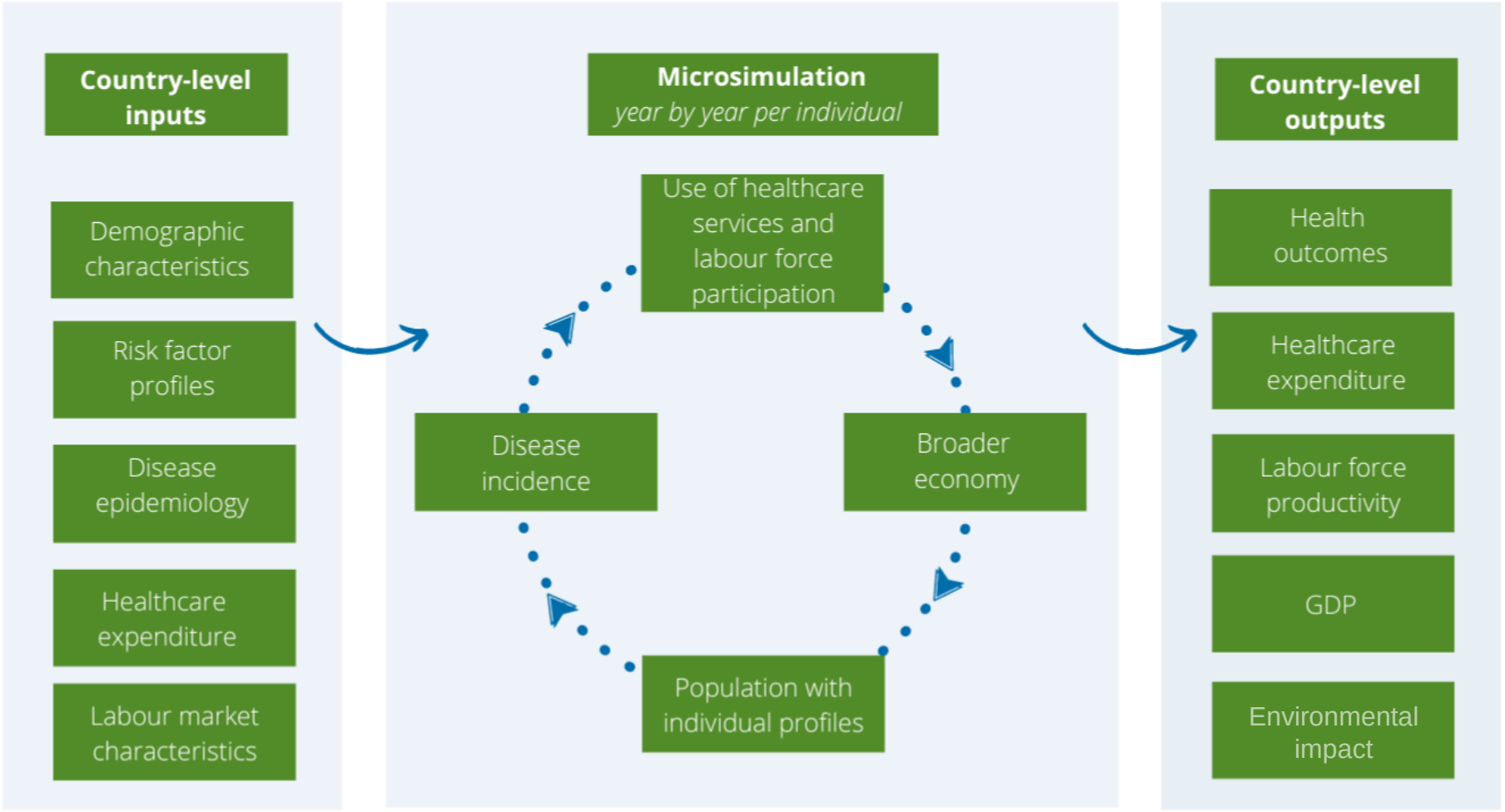
BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

OECD's Work Explores A Wide Range Of Health, Economic And Wellbeing Outcomes: The Case Of Cancer



Reference: oe.cd/cancer-2024

The OECD SPHeP (Strategic Public Health Planning) Framework Is Used For Our Analyses



- Dynamic microsim/pseudo-ABM environments
- Time horizon: 2023-2050
- 51 countries and global coverage
- 32 chronic diseases, 20 infectious diseases and 14 risk factors contributing to nearly 90% of total mortality

Reference: https://oe.cd/phmodelling

Zooming In On Outputs and Stakeholders' Interests

- OECD produces outputs across multiple dimensions, notably with a focus on health and economics.
- Stakeholder interest is predominantly focused on economic outputs.
- Health-related outputs typically include:
  - Number of cases by disease
  - Life expectancy and healthy life expectancy
  - Premature deaths (before age 75)
  - Life years and Disability-Adjusted Life Years (DALYs)
- Value of Statistical Life has been used in the past (and still is in environmental work) but received limited enthusiasm from our constituency because preference is given to showing co-benefits of public health interventions, rather than relying on cost-benefit analyses.

A Closer Look At DALYs In The SPHeP Framework

- We produce non-standard DALYs, adapted for our analytical framework. After early debate with Delegates, we chose to calculate QALYs using DALY-derived weights for quality of life.
- With limitations, we also account for different stages of the same disease, reflecting varying levels of severity as well as associated sequelae.
- Using DALYs also causes some practical challenges:
  - DALYs (and QALYs) are difficult to communicate to senior-level policymakers and the general public, which are our primary audience.
  - In a dynamic modeling environment such as the SPHeP framework, DALYs becomes less informative, as public health interventions do not eliminate diseases but rather delay their onset or shift the burden to other conditions, sometimes even to those that are more disabling.

From Knowing to Doing: The Burden Analysis Is a Crucial Component Of A Broader Set Of Analyses



Analysis of trends and patterns — Situation analysis and identification of priorities

Health and economic burden — Economic case for action

Policy assessment — Identification of policy gaps and areas for action

Return on investment — Investment case for upscaling identified priorities

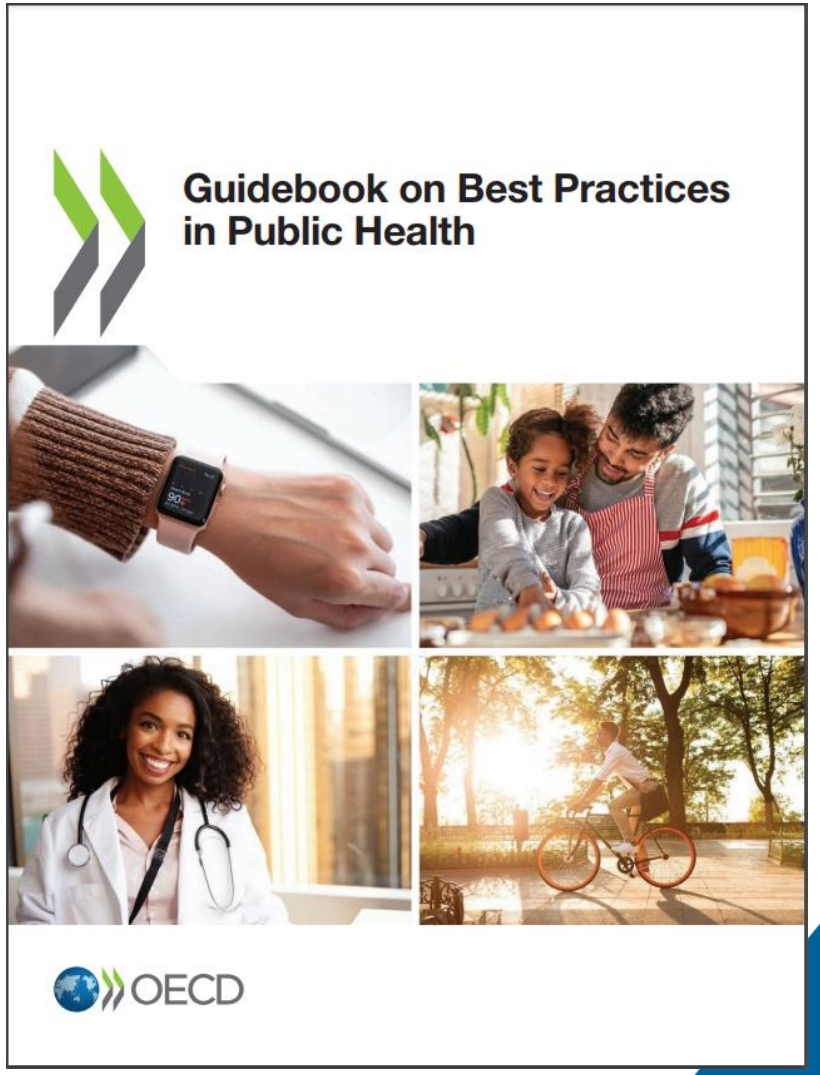
Impact on industry — Evidence on common issues

Steps in which modelling plays a fundamental role

We Help Countries Implement Better Public Health Policies For Better Lives

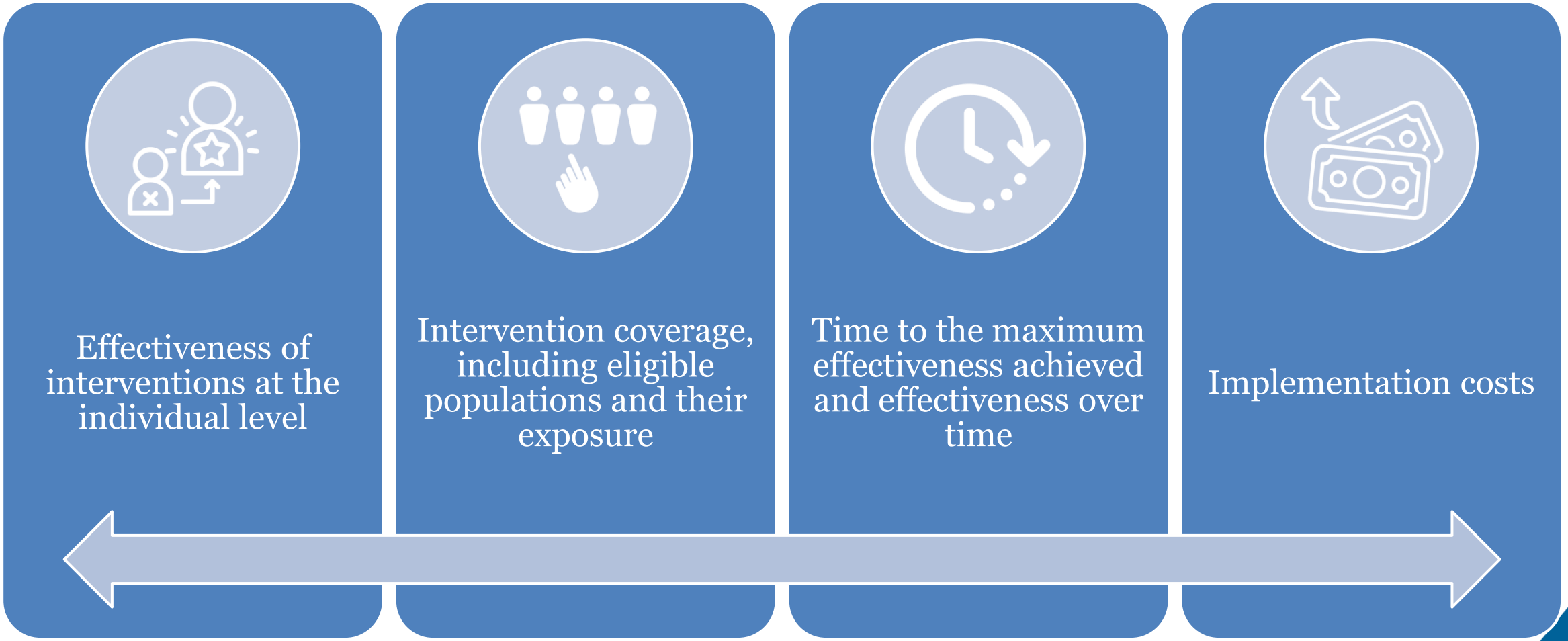
We provide policy-makers with the evidence to make the economic case to implement best practice in public health:

- Does the policy improve health and lives?
- Does it provide a good return on investment?
- Does it decrease (health) inequalities?
- Is it affordable and sustainable to implement?
- Is it (politically) feasible?
- Is it scalable and transferable?



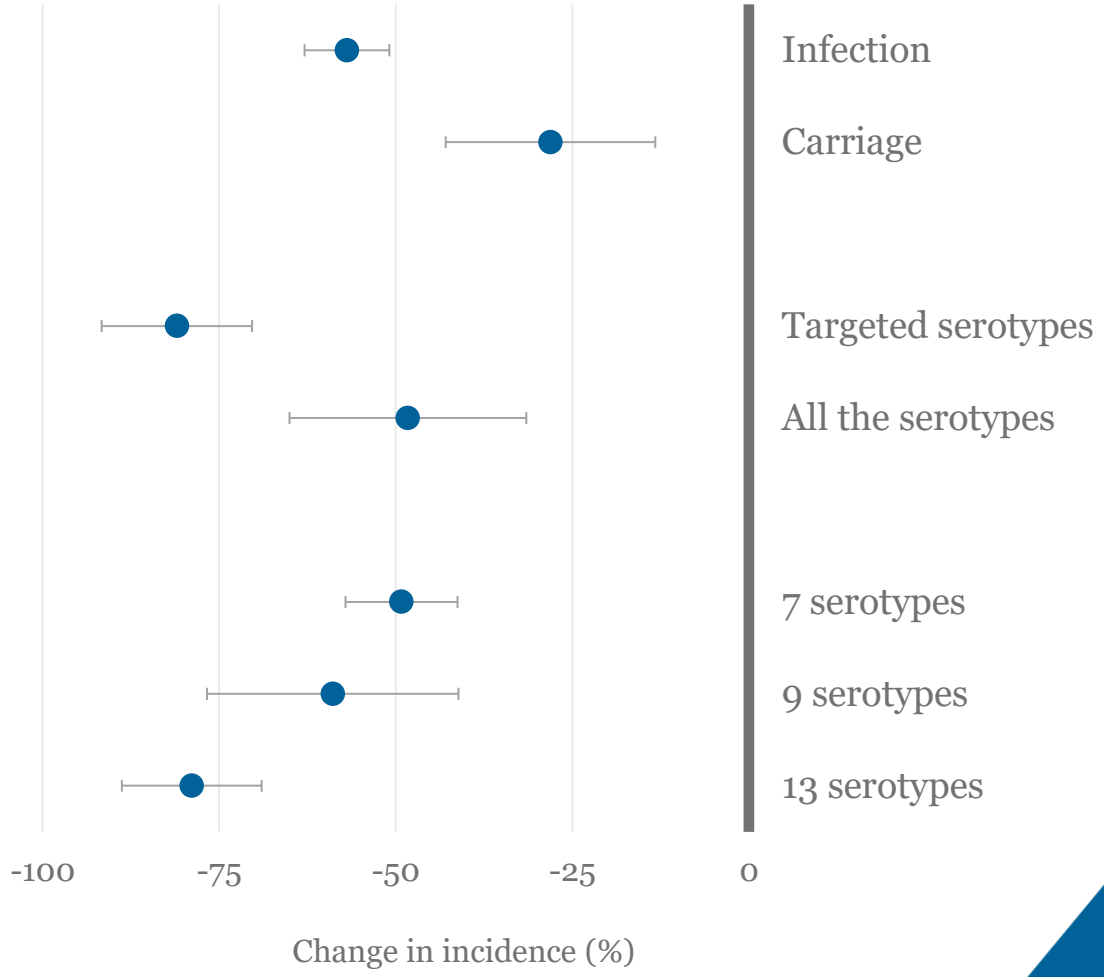
HOW THE OECD USES THE SPHEP FRAMEWORK TO MODEL PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTIONS

Interventions Are Modelled on Four Dimensions



Modelling The Effectiveness At Individual Level: The Example Of Vaccines for Bacterial Infections

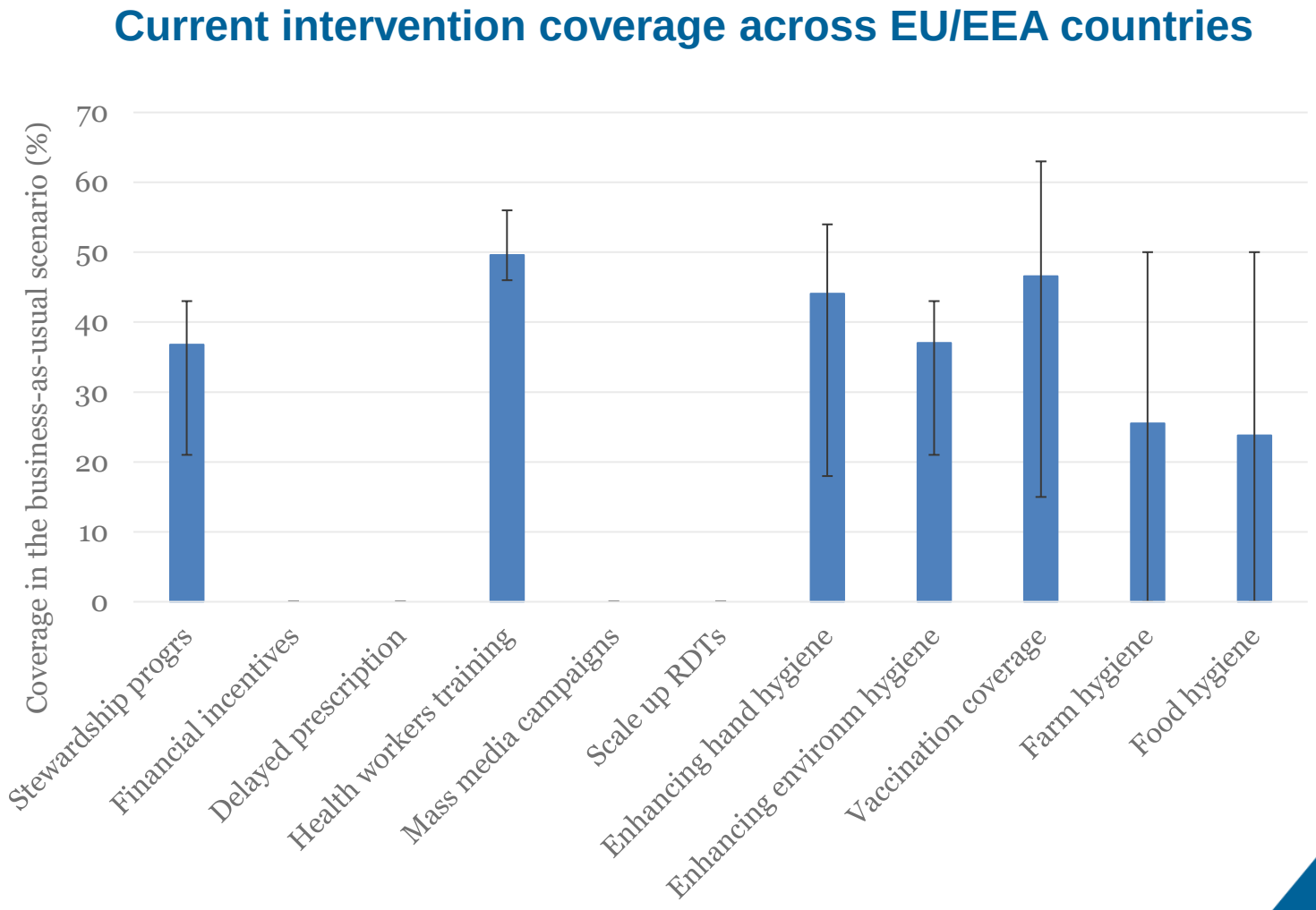
- Vaccines can halve the incidence of infections and decrease the probability of carriage;
- Serotype replacement is likely to take place following the introduction of an immunization programme, but the replacement does not seem to be complete and the vaccine remains effective, at least in the medium-term;
- The more comprehensive the coverage of serotypes the higher the effectiveness.



Source: Wang, Cravo Oliveira, Cecchini (2021) Impact of vaccination on AMR; https://doi.org/10.7774/cevr.2021.10.2.81

Level Of Implementation Of Interventions Across EU/EEA Countries

- Many of the considered interventions are already implemented at a sub-optimal level across countries;
- Data on current level of coverage are retrieved from international databases (e.g. OECD.Stat, WHO, WB), the literature and interaction with national governmental institutions;
- This approach allows to evaluate the incremental impact (marginal effect) of upscaling the policy in the current context (business-as-usual).



Note: column shows EU/EEA average, whiskers show min and max level of implementation across EU/EEA countries

Source: oe.cd/AMRonehealth

Time To The Maximum Effectiveness Achieved And Effectiveness Over Time: Different Factors At Play

Time to roll out the intervention	Time to reach maximum impact	Time due to cohort effect	Time to effectiveness decay
• Programmes, particularly if new, need time to be planned and rolled out • Implementation across OECD countries is likely to be nationwide since the beginning, but in LMICs it is more likely to be patchy	• Response to an intervention may not be immediate and targets may require some exposure time before showing change • For some interventions, multiple exposures may increase impact	• Specific to interventions targeting specific groups (e.g. age groups, such as for vaccination) • Significant amount of time is needed before target coverage at the population level is achieved	• Unless an intervention is repeated, its effectiveness is likely to change over time • Particularly for behavioural interventions, the effectiveness decay over time

THE ROLE OF OECD ANALYSES IN SHAPING POLICY: EXAMPLES FROM PRACTICE

The EC And EU Member States Priority Is On Identifying and Transferring Best Practices

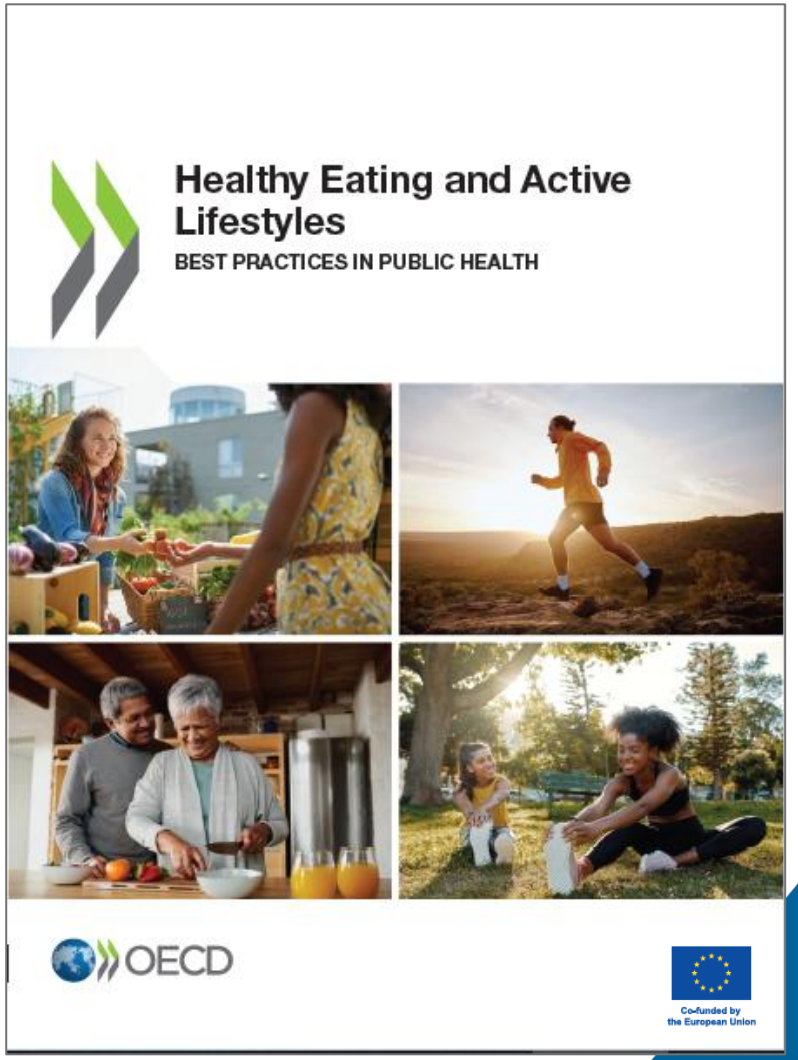
- In the last few years, the EC and the EU Member States have placed high priority on identifying what works best across EU MSs and supporting mutual learning;
- The EC has also guided Joint Actions to test or scale up new policies on the ground;
- OECD supports this initiative by making the economic case for these promising and best practices.



Reference: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/dyna/bp-portal/

Some of the Best Practices In Public Health With Which OECD Has Partnered To Support Transfer And Scaling Up

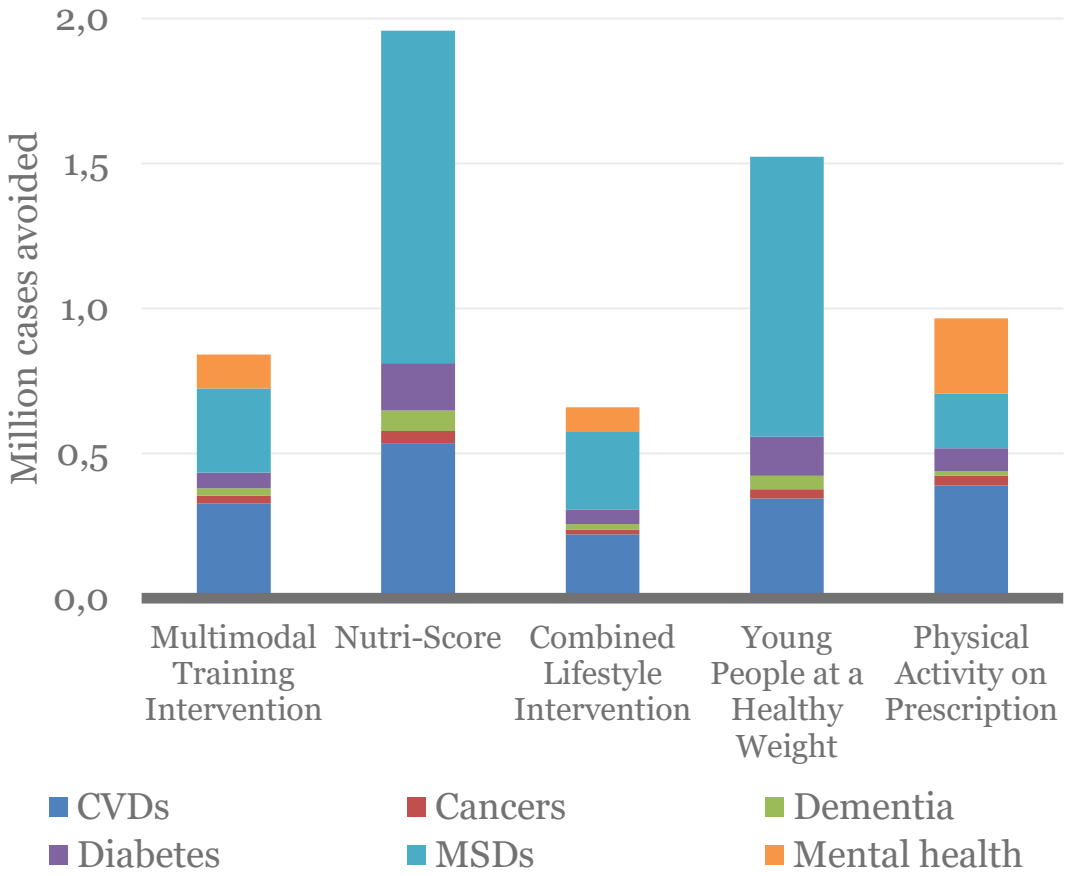
- The multimodal training intervention is an exercise-based programme from Iceland targeting individuals aged 65+ years who live independently at home
- The Nutri-Score is the front-of-pack nutrition labelling scheme most commonly used in Europe and candidate for becoming an EU-wide scheme.
- The combined lifestyle intervention is a lifestyle-counselling programme offered in the Netherlands, which provides dietary advice, physical activity training, and counselling on behavioural change over a period of two years
- Young People at a Healthy Weight is a healthy lifestyle community-based programme targeting children 0 to 19 years in the Netherlands
- Physical Activity on Prescription is a programme in Sweden where health professionals write individualised prescriptions for physical activity to adult patients



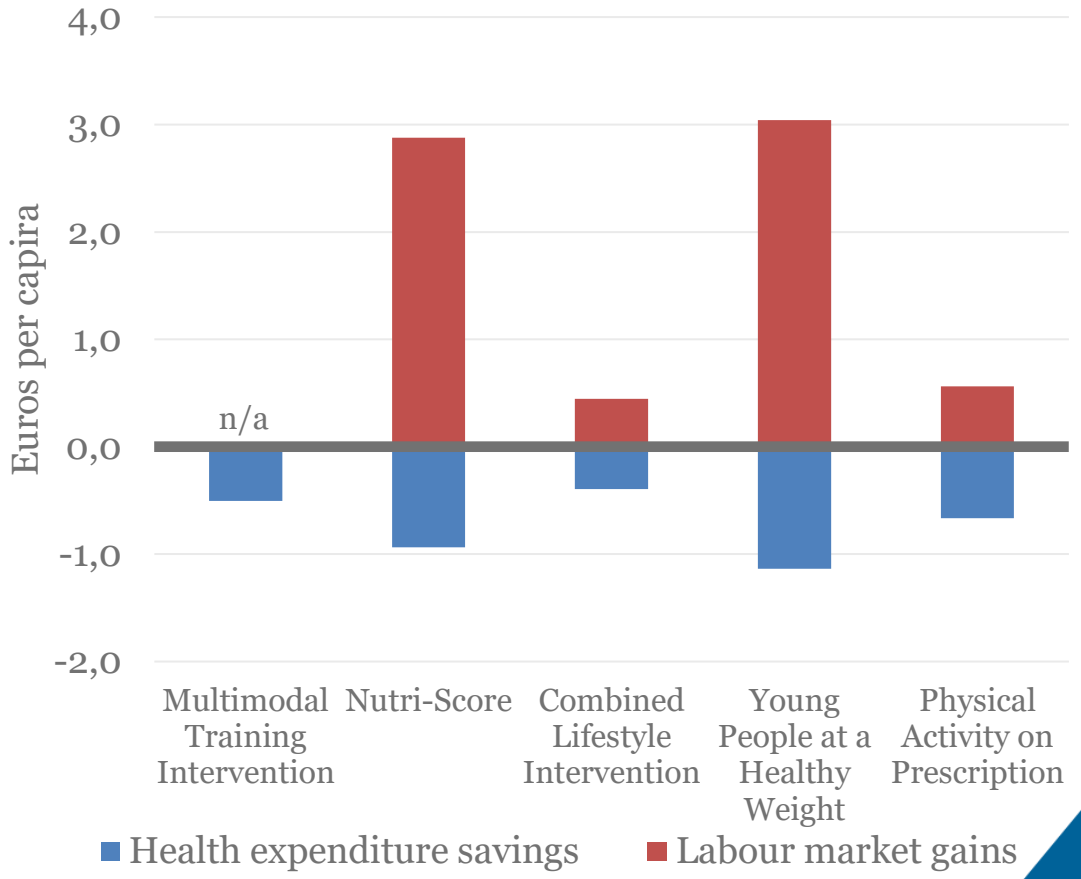
Source: OECD (2022) Healthy eating and active lifestyles – best practices in public health, oe.cd/best-practices

If Transferred Across Europe, Best Practices Have The Potential To Improve People's Health and The Economy

Cases of chronic diseases that can be avoided across EU27 before 2050



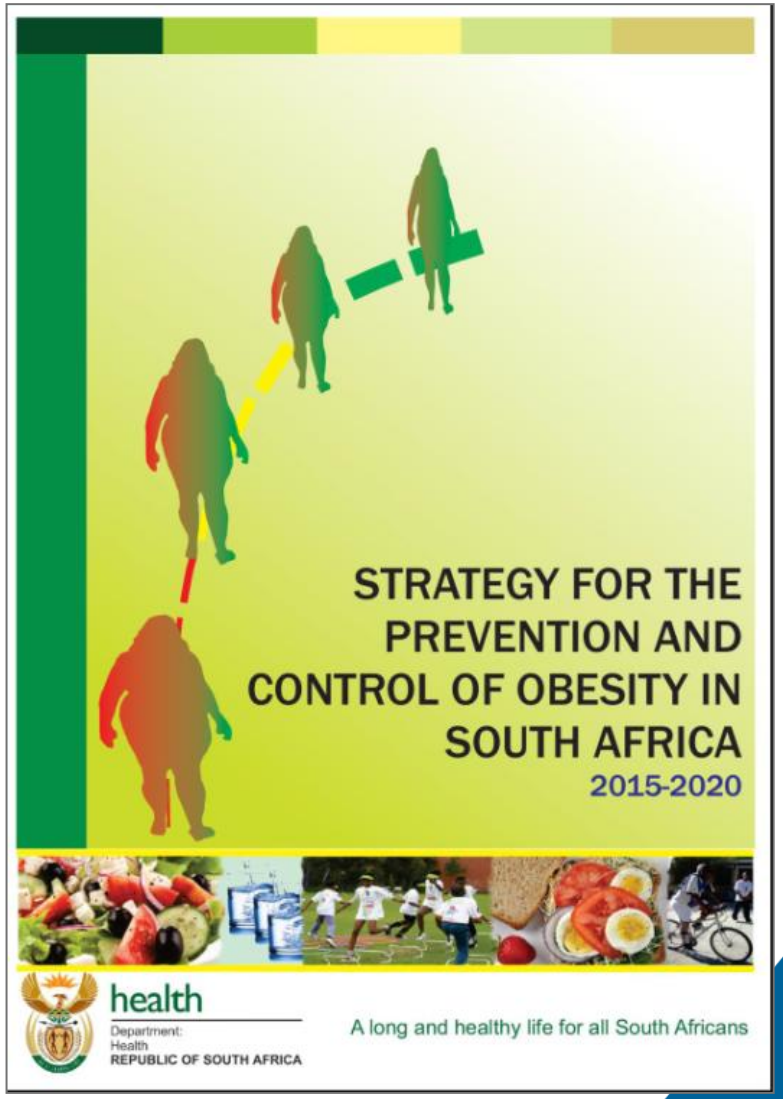
Health expenditure savings and workforce gains, Euros per capita per year across EU27



Source: OECD (2022) Healthy eating and active lifestyles – best practices in public health, oe.cd/best-practices

OECD Supported South Africa In Designing And Passing The 2017 Sugar Tax

- OECD produced the economic analysis behind the 2015-20 Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Obesity in South Africa;
- In 2016-17 OECD, together with WHO, started a 1.5 year long project to support ZAF in the legislative process for the proposed tax on sugar sweetened beverages;
- Originally, there were 4 proposals on the table, differing in terms of tax rate, design (e.g. to incentivize reformulation) and whether it should be accompanied by regulation of sugar content;
- OECD worked with local and international partners to assess the impact of the various options, build consensus within the government, mobilize stakeholders and inform legislators.



There Were A Number Of Attempts At Stopping Or Watering Down the Proposed Legislation





Stay Tuned: Much More is Coming!

Resources are available online at: oe.cd/publichealth

Contact me: Michele.Cecchini@oecd.org

Forthcoming publications in the pipeline:

- Preventing mental ill-health and promoting mental wellbeing – best practices in public health
- The impact of NCDs on the people, the economy and societies
- Optimising non-pharmaceutical interventions in the early phases of pandemics: health and economic co-benefits
- Healthier and greener cities – best practices in public health
- GLP-1 RA drugs in the management of obesity
- Regulating online advertisement of unhealthy products targeting children
- From Vision to Implementation: The Evaluation and Politics of Public Health Policy in the OECD
- The economics of mental health
- Tracking employee health and wellbeing indicators to foster a healthier, more productive workplace
- Countdown to 2030: smart national investments in one health to achieve global AMR targets
- The economics of lifecourse vaccination: optimizing value and securing access

