

***Project: »Child & Youth wellbeing and mental health first«
– Healthy lifestyle and wellbeing of children and young people in
Slovenia***

Welcome from Ministry of Health team: Agata Zupančič, Tamara Arh and Janja Križman Miklavčič. We look forward to connecting and learning together. Special thanks to EC.

PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

Project background in Slovenia, reasons for action, expectations

Upades on activities, key preliminary results (Karan Country Haag, UNICEF)

Questions (MoH team)



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Project Focus

We aim to strengthen the health, mental wellbeing, education, social systems and services, as well as the community environment, for children, adolescents, and young people at risk of or living **with overweight or obesity**.

We also aim to improve **the skills and knowledge** of key service providers to identify children, adolescents, and young people at risk of or living with overweight or obesity, and to **reduce stigma-related** issues that children and families may experience, which could affect their wellbeing.

We aim to establish a system that would **enable and motivate** a vulnerable individual, after completing one of MoH programmes, to **join supportive activities** within the local community that would help them maintain their new healthy lifestyle as **the foundation of good mental health**.



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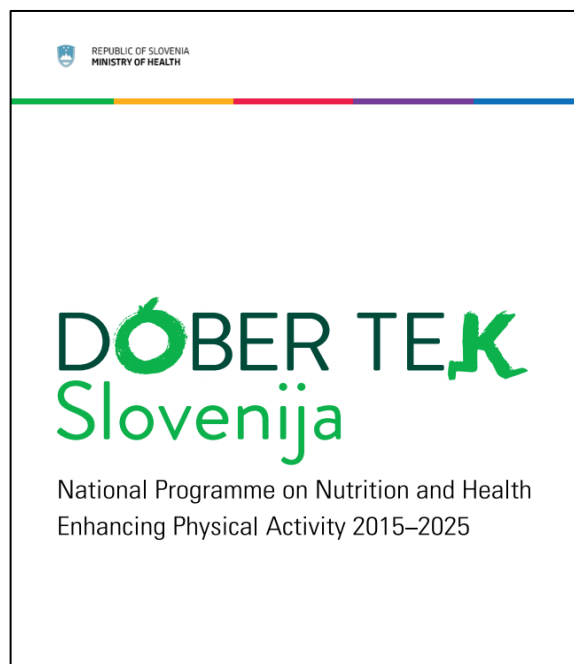


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Integration of TSI results and recommendations

- Findings will inform the new National Programme on Nutrition and Physical Activity 2026-2036.



VISION: TO MAKE THE
HEALTHY CHOICE THE EASIER
AND MORE ACCESSIBLE
CHOICE.

OBJECTIVE:
IMPROVE NUTRITION AND
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY HABITS,
PREVENT OBESITY AND
CHRONIC DISEASES

2026-2036



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Challenges

- Obesity among adults in Slovenia has been rising both in men and women the last 30 years. Early detection and health prevention programs have been established. The environment is changing rapidly.

Anticipated aims:

- Identifying unhealthy lifestyles in children and adolescents and developing appropriate programmes within the healthcare system
- Early detection and treatment of children and adolescents with risk factors

DOBER TEK
Slovenija

National Programme on Nutrition and Health
Enhancing Physical Activity 2015–2025

→ **Detecting unhealthy life style in children and young people and empowerment programmes**

Health-care programmes must detect individuals at risk due to unhealthy diet and sedentary life style early enough and develop an efficient system of treatment, referral and follow-up on the health condition of a person at risk during pregnancy, childhood and adolescence. It is important that valid prevention programmes are improved so that, in addition to early detection in cases of poor eating habits and insufficient physical activity and counselling provided in such cases to children, young people and their families, suitable programmes are provided which support changes in eating habits and changes in habits regarding physical activity, whereby these programmes are connected with the local environment.

GOALS

Decrease the proportion of overweight children and young people and the proportion of obese children and young people with a special focus on boys.



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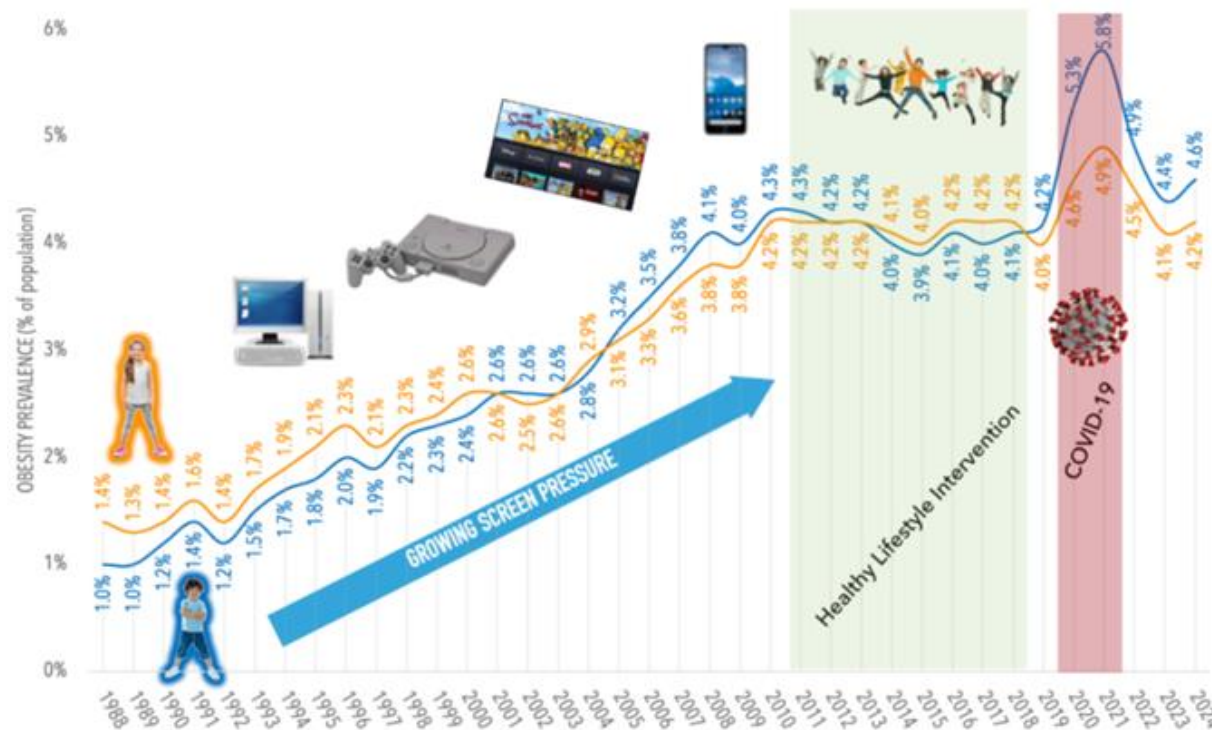


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Childhood Obesity

- Slovenia reversed childhood obesity trend in 2011. Success through physical activity education and programme Healthy life style (additional physical activity hours at school), healthy food in schools and intersectoral work.
- New rise post-COVID. Need to boost prevention.



Slovenia - WHO
example of good
practice

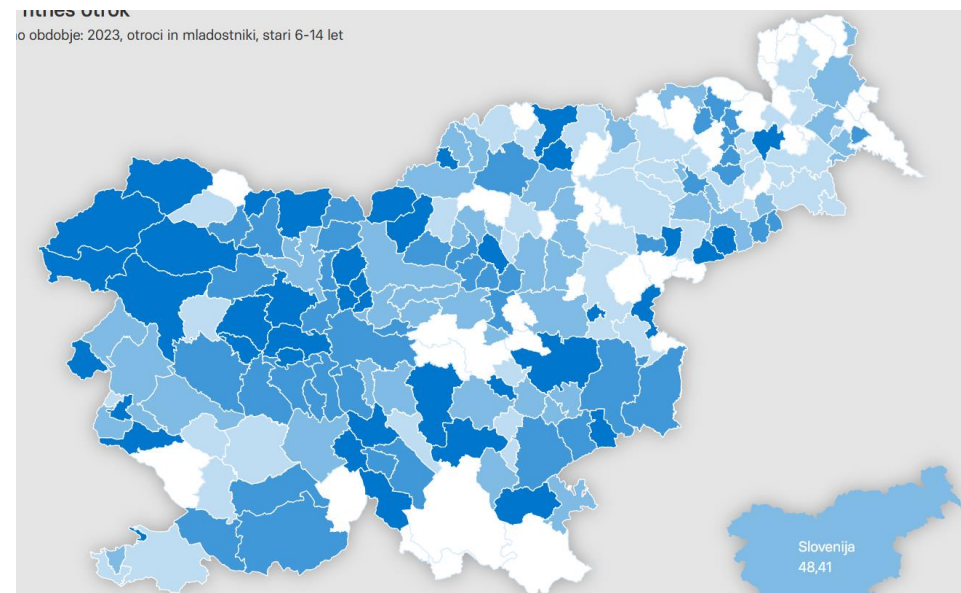
Regional Disparities

- Obesity more common in Eastern Slovenia. Reflects broader socio-economic and health inequalities. Gender – based disparities. Cultural differences.

**Distribution of obesity in Slovenia (ages 18–74)
in 2024, by statistical regions**



**Physical fitness of children and adolescents
(ages 6–14), by municipalities, in 2023**



Accessible Primary Care & Prevention

Strong local primary care. 46 of 62 health centres now upgraded with health promotion centres (2024). New family-based intervention

FAMILY APPROACH FOR HEALTHY LIFESTYLE INTERVENTION

- 95% reach (preventive check up)
- Multidisciplinary team: pediatrician, nurse, kinesiologist, nutritionist, psychologist
- Individual consultations and workshops
- Day care (3 months)
- Community support



INTEGRATED HEALTH PROMOTION CENTRES

- Reducing health inequalities in local communities and including vulnerable groups.
- Implementation of preventive programmes for children and adults, including counselling on healthy eating and physical activity
- Holistic approach and community-based work.
- National network is managed by National institute for public health

Service is fully covered by compulsory health insurance.



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Programme: School of Healthy Lifestyle

- Šentvid children`s hospital. For already overweight and obese children and adolescents. Fully covered by Compulsory Health Insurance. More intensive (14 days in hospital setting). Follow-up for 2 years.
- Team: pediatrician, psychologist, occupational therapist, psychotherapist, nutrition advisor, kinesiologist



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Seaside children's health resort Debeli Rtič

'My Challenge' camp for overweight children. Funded by Ministry of Health. 14-days programme. Children's age: 7–19 years. Parents present on weekends. Monthly progress monitoring of children over the period of one year.



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Working together for a healthier environment

- Partnerships with urban planning, transport, sport, agriculture, environment, education, culture, social service sector ...
- Focus on green environments for physical activity, active mobility, local healthy food, healthy school meals, breastfeeding-friendly locations, promotion of regular breakfast, campaigns on harmful effects of energy drinks, food reformulation ...



Motivation for TSI

- Health exists where we live.
- Support beyond health: help children/families overcome different obstacles like poverty, unhealthy environment, poor mental health ...
- Need for stronger ties with other sectors and local communities for better quality, accessibility, responsiveness, effectiveness of preventive programmes.
- Improvement of preventive programmes from user perspective

Support as a
prerequisite for
participation

PREVENTIVE
PROGRAMMES
(LIFESTYLE CHANGE
PROGRAMMES)

Continued support for
sustaining a healthy
lifestyle after
completion of
programmes



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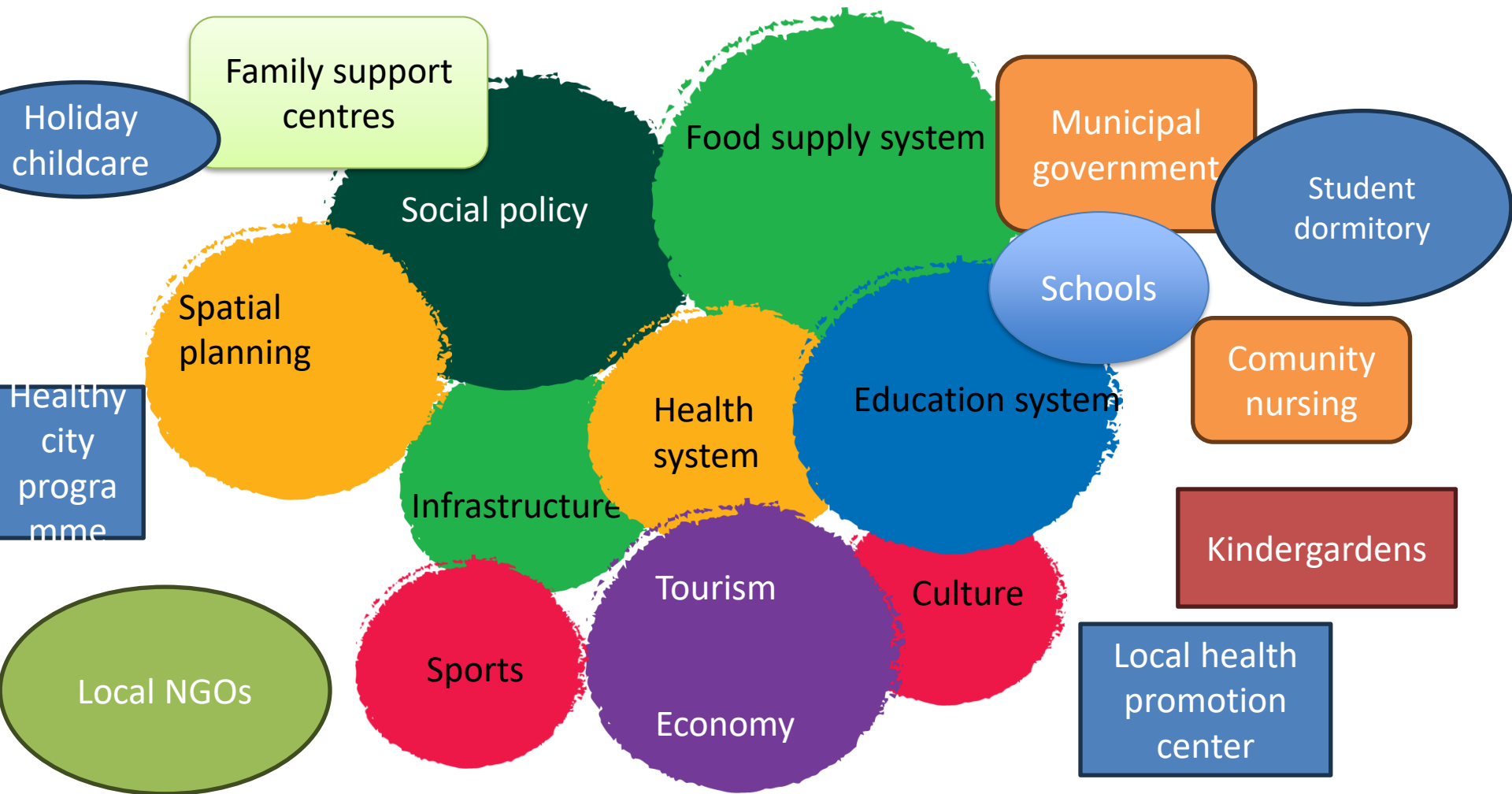


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The opportunity is now

Build on current momentum. Include TSI findings. Ongoing workshops and dialogue with stakeholders on how to stop obesity trend and improve environments.





10 multisectoral workshops (integration of TSI findings, best practices)



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TSI: Main expectations

IMPROVE SERVICES.



IMPROVE NATIONAL INTERSECTORAL COOPERATION



ESTABLISH STRONG YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND ADVOCACY FOR HEALTH.



STRENGTHEN LOCAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



- Reinforce **cooperation with youth** in the field of nutrition and physical activity (advocacy)
- Improvement of programmes in consultation with youth
- Improvement of skills and knowledge of key service providers to identify children, adolescents and young people at risk or living with overweight or obesity
- **Reduction of stigma** related issues children and families may experience (motivation, communication skills).



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Ongoing activities

- **asses the adequacy and effectiveness of multidisciplinary services** for early detection and treatment of children, adolescents and young people at risk of overweight and obesity in terms of accessibility and responsiveness to their needs
- Identification of new **cross referral opportunities** between programmes and stakeholders in the local community by **mapping the different service providers and with interviews**
- **through participatory research**, assesment of how emotional, broader social and family factors influence and affect children's capacity to make and sustain lifestyle changes
- **capacity buliding** of key stakeholders and youth (interviews, workshops, exchange of best practices)



Thank you!



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