



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 3 December 2012**

**17035/12**

**DENLEG 118  
SAN 311**

**NOTE**

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from:	General Secretariat of the Council
to:	Council
Subject:	<b>Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumers</b> Council meeting on 6 and 7 December 2012

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Survey on Member States' implementation of the EU framework on salt reduction  
- *Information from the Commission*  
(Other business item)

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Delegations will find annexed an information note from the Commission on the above-mentioned subject.

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**EPSCO COUNCIL – 7 DECEMBER 2012****WRITTEN INFORMATION FROM THE COMMISSION SERVICES****SURVEY ON MEMBER STATES' IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EU FRAMEWORK ON  
SALT REDUCTION**

The aim of this note is to provide an update about the implementation of the EU Framework for National Initiatives on Salt (the "Framework") by the 27 Member States, Norway and Switzerland from mid-2008 until mid-2012. This follows from the Council Conclusions of 8 June 2010 on action to reduce population salt intake for better health, which call on the Commission to provide an analysis of the situation and actions taken in the EU and its Member States in 2012.

The Framework is an important component of the Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity related Health Issues, adopted in May 2007 under its priority for "making the healthier option available", which encompasses actions on nutrient composition of manufactured foods - including food reformulation initiatives such as salt reduction campaigns. It was welcomed on 7 December 2007 by Council Conclusions as a first priority for discussion within the High Level Group.

Member States agreed to the creation of a voluntary Framework in July 2008. All Member States participated in the Framework, which aimed at a 16% reduction of salt over four years, with flexibility for Member States to set different national benchmarks. The Commission services have compiled contributions from the national representatives of the High Level Group on Nutrition and Physical Activity (the "High Level Group") and the survey is published on the EUROPA web site.

The key conclusions of the Survey on the implementation of the Framework are:

- the EU Salt Framework has been a catalyst for action for a number of Member States with new initiatives introduced across the EU;
- while the maximum intake thresholds recommended by the WHO have not yet been met, first steps were taken towards reducing excessive salt intake across the EU as one element for improving the diets and promoting people's health;
- most countries have had negotiations with food business operators or representative sectorial associations, and their general willingness to engage was considered positive; many concrete agreements between Member States and food business operators or representative sectorial associations were reached;
- many countries have started awareness raising actions;
- the reduction of salt intake is a step-by-step process as technological barriers and food safety concerns need to be addressed; therefore initiatives will continue to be developed in the Member States in the coming years;
- most countries have a monitoring approach in place or planned, and results are already published or are expected in the following two years.

Work will continue in the framework of the High Level Group and the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health to secure quantifiable commitments from the food industry, ensure that effective mechanisms for monitoring salt reduction programmes are in place, and support Member States' efforts to strengthen, sustain or develop national initiatives aimed at achieving appropriate salt consumption levels.

A similar approach has started on other nutrients with the EU Framework for National Initiatives on Selected Nutrients. The focus is now on saturated fat, while work on salt reduction is continuing.