

## Differences and Similarities between Front-of-Pack Nutrition Labels in Europe: A Comparison of Functional and Visual Aspects

Globally, there is growing momentum to implement front-of-pack nutrition labels. However, many different types of labels co-exist and vary in their visual and functional features, which impacts the effectiveness of the labels. Therefore, this paper “compares and provides an overview of all front-of-pack labels currently in practice or in preparation in Europe.”

A total of nine front-of-pack labels were included in the study. Common features identified across the different label schemes included the type of component, reference unit, measurement method as well as the main purpose of the label. This study recommends that more research is conducted on the rationale behind and application (of the criteria) of Front-of-Pack labelling. Furthermore, the study highlights the need to explore these factors taking into account the variety of stakeholders involved or impact by front-of-pack labelling policies.

Ultimately, the study highlighted that there remains “much debate about which front-of-pack label is most effective for improving dietary behaviours of consumers.” This paper provides “a comprehensive and updated overview of the different functional and visual features of all front-of-pack labels currently in practice or in preparation in Europe.” In order to increase the impact of front-of-pack labels, close attention should be brought to the specificities of the different labels. Ultimately, a better understanding of the labels will allow national governments to promote and develop the strongest scheme and aim to use these as national health tools. There is therefore a need to keep monitoring the impact of existing front-of-pack labels and monitor international implementation experiences. Ultimately, full comprehension and awareness of the different characteristics of FOP labels by all involved stakeholders, outlined against the cultural contexts in which each of these labels thrives, can bring the FOP labelling debate to the next level and help interpret the outcomes of effect studies. This is valuable, especially since the variety of FOP labels in the marketplace is dynamic and constantly changing as many countries are currently considering introducing FOP labels as national health tools. This emphasises the need to further expand and continue updating this present overview of existing FOP labelling schemes and stay informed on the global FOP labelling developments over time.

Reference: van der Bend, D.L.M.L. & Lissner, L. Differences and similarities between front-of-pack nutrition labels in Europe: A comparison of functional and visual aspects. *Nutrients*. 2019;11(3). <https://www.mdpi.com/2072-6643/11/3/626>