



FACTSHEET

Nutri-Score

MAKING IT EASY TO CHOOSE THE HEALTHY OPTION

EU citizens are increasingly overweight or obese and therefore more prone to heart disease and diabetes. Part of the problem has to do with our diets. Yet spotting the healthier yoghurt, cereals or ready meal in the supermarket is no easy task. Nutri-Score supports consumers by making it possible to compare at a glance the nutritional quality of products.



What is Nutri-Score

Nutri-Score is a front-of-pack nutritional label which converts the nutritional value of food and beverages into a simple overall score. It is based on a scale of 5 colours and letters (A is green to represent the best nutritional quality while E is dark orange to show it's the lowest).

How is it calculated?

Nutri-Score is calculated taking into account both the nutrients to limit (calories, saturated fat, sugars and salt) and those elements to favour (fibre, proteins, nuts, fruit and vegetables). The food is assigned a colour and letter based on the resulting score, calculated per 100g or 100ml. The algorithm was developed by a team of [independent researchers](#).

Where is it used?

The French government has been recommending food companies and retailers to use Nutri-Score since 2017. [Belgium](#) backed the label the following year and [Spain](#) shortly followed suit. In September 2019, Germany also announced that it would introduce the Nutri-Score.¹

Why do we need simple nutritional labels?

One third of children and half of adults in the EU are overweight or obese. Excess weight increases a person's risk to develop nutrition-related chronic diseases such as diabetes and cancer. National governments and international public bodies such as the World Health Organization² see front-of-pack nutritional labelling as one of the tools to help consumers shift to healthier diets.

¹ vzbv, "[Unternehmen sollten Nutri-Score zügig nutzen](#)", 30 septembre 2019.

² [WHO European Food and Nutrition Action Plan 2015-2020](#).

³ Enax, L. et al. Salient nutrition labels increase the integration of health attributes in food decision-making. *Judgment and Decision Making*, Vol. 11, No. 5, September 2016, pp. 460–471.



What an efficient label should look like according to experts:

- **Colour-coding greatly helps consumers** to compare the nutritional quality of food and beverages.³
- To better support consumers, a nutritional label should be **applied across as many products as possible and give both positive and negative evaluations**.
- Also, it should be based on **uniform reference amounts such as per 100g/100ml** to spare consumers from making tricky calculations to compare products.
- Finally, such a label should be developed based on **solid, independent and transparent scientific evidence**, and be free from commercial interests.

Why Nutri-Score?

Besides ticking all the above boxes, Nutri-Score's advantages are the following:

- **It is the easiest label to understand.** Evidence from research conducted in several countries shows Nutri-Score currently is the best-performing scheme in aiding consumers to compare the nutritional value of foods across a range of products.⁴
- **It makes consumers' shopping baskets healthier.** Research has shown that it is the label that works best in making consumers' food choices healthier – including for low-income households, who are most at risk of becoming overweight or obese.⁵
- **It incentivises food makers to improve their recipes.** To achieve a better score, manufacturers must improve the nutritional quality of their products.
- **It helps consumers eat smaller portions.** Nutri-Score is the most efficient front-of-pack label to encourage consumers to decrease their portion sizes when eating less healthy products.⁶

What is the situation in the EU?

Since 2016, all food and non-alcoholic drinks on sale in the EU must carry a nutritional declaration on the back of the pack. But few consumers can take the time to read the nutritional table and need something that sums it up quickly. A simplified nutritional label on the front of the pack with colour-coding allows them to spot instantly the healthier yoghurt or snack. That's why BEUC wants such a label to become mandatory.



⁴ Egnell, M. et al. [Objective Understanding of Front-of-Package Nutrition Labels: An International Comparative Experimental Study across 12 Countries](#), *Nutrients*, 2018 Oct; 10(10): 1542.

⁵ Crossetto et al. [Modification des achats alimentaires en réponse à cinq logos nutritionnels](#), *Cahiers de nutrition et diététique* Vol 52 – N°3 P. 129-133 – juin 2017.

⁶ Egnell, M. et al. [Impact of Front-of-Pack Nutrition Labels on Portion Size Selection: An Experimental Study in a French Cohort](#) *Nutrients* 2018, 10, 1268.