

25 interventions delivering public health impact in five years or less

The clock is ticking. With just **five years left to achieve 2030 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3.4** of reducing premature deaths from noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) by one-third – it's time for urgent action.

NCDs, including cardiovascular diseases, cancers, diabetes and chronic respiratory illnesses, account for approximately 90% of all deaths and 85% of disabilities across the WHO European Region. Many of these deaths are premature and preventable. Addressing major risk factors such as tobacco use, alcohol consumption, unhealthy diets and physical inactivity, alongside improving access to effective treatments, can significantly reduce this burden.

Without urgent action, many countries in the Region will fall short of the 2030 SDG target 3.4 to reduce premature NCD mortality by one-third.

Act now

Quick buys provide a practical and strategic approach for achieving rapid impacts on health and progress toward UN targets.

Implementing and enforcing these interventions can put countries on track to achieve their global commitments by 2030 and beyond.

Learn more here.



The 25 quick buy interventions

In response, the WHO Regional Office for Europe has identified 25 quick buys – proven, cost-effective policies and interventions that deliver measurable public health improvements within just one to five years, and some even within months.

These NCD quick buys are rapid-return interventions that can show impact within a single electoral cycle, providing immediate, tangible results that resonate with citizens.

By embracing quick buys, policymakers can:



Deliver rapid health

improvements: Show immediate progress through impactful interventions that visibly enhance public health in a short period, thus increasing trust and political credibility.



Put countries back on track for SDG 3.4 and other global NCD targets:

Accelerate progress towards meeting global commitments.



Maximize resource efficiency:

Leverage limited budgets effectively by implementing low-cost policies with proven high returns in reducing healthcare costs and preventing long-term chronic conditions.

Maximizing long-term gains

Quick buys are not shortcuts; their successful implementation demands political leadership, cross-sectoral collaboration, and strong commitment and enforcement. Policymakers should focus on the following strategic areas to fully capitalize on the potential of quick buys:

Political commitment and multi-sector collaboration: Many quick buys involve policy and legislative action that require cross-sector collaboration and strong leadership to pass laws and regulations. Early engagement of stakeholders and clear communication of public health and economic benefits can help build political support.

Health system preparedness and public awareness: Effective delivery of quick buys depends on the preparedness of health systems and public awareness. Policymakers should prioritize strengthening primary healthcare services, ensuring essential medications and treatments are accessible, and implement targeted public health campaigns to drive behavioural changes.

Monitoring, evaluation and knowledge exchange: To demonstrate early results, governments should monitor key indicators in real time and capture early signs of progress. Quick buys are grounded in strong evidence, and sharing lessons learned is essential to support wider implementation, sustain political momentum and maximize long-term gains.

25 quick buys

with measurable impact
in less than 5 years

NCD quick buys with measurable impact in less than 1 year



Reducing tobacco use

- 100% smoke-free public and work spaces
- Increase excise taxes and prices
- Pharmacological interventions



Reducing alcohol consumption

- Increase excise taxes
- Bans on alcohol advertising
- Restrictions on availability



Promoting healthier diets

- Front-of-pack labelling



Increasing physical activity

- Brief counselling intervention on physical activity in primary health care



Reducing the cancer burden

- HPV vaccination
- Cervical cancer screening
- Early breast cancer diagnosis programmes
- Early cervical cancer diagnosis programmes



Tackling chronic respiratory diseases

- Acute treatment of COPD exacerbations with inhaled bronchodilators and oral steroids



Tackling cardiovascular diseases

- Pharmacological treatment of hypertension in adults
- Treatment of myocardial infarctions with acetylsalicylic acid
- Treatment of strokes with intravenous thrombolytic therapy



Tackling diabetes

- Glycaemic control
- Statin use in people with diabetes >40 years old



NCD quick buys with measurable impact in 2–3 years



Reducing tobacco use

- Large graphic health warnings along with plain packaging
- Advertising, sponsorship and promotion bans



Reducing alcohol consumption

- Brief interventions for persons with hazardous and harmful use



Promoting healthier diets

- Food reformulation



Tackling diabetes

- Control of blood pressure in people with diabetes

NCD quick buys with measurable impact in 3–5 years



Promoting healthier diets

- Behaviour change communication



Tackling diabetes

- Screening for albuminuria and treatment for angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitor