Childhood obesity is a major public health problem globally, with the potential to undermine progress towards achieving the SDGs. Prevention is recognised as the only feasible option for curbing the epidemic. Nutritional surveillance data are essential to effectively design, implement and evaluate policies and strategies aimed at counteracting obesity.

European countries have supported the implementation and expansion of the WHO European Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative (or COSI), a system that measures trends in overweight and obesity in over 300,000 children from more than 40 Member States in the WHO European Region. COSI provides countries with nationally-representative and fully comparable data on child growth.

Data from this system helps countries prioritise obesity and drive policy implementation. Several countries that were early adopters of COSI have seen childhood obesity levelling off and/or eventually decreasing. This side event will discuss the importance of good data for policy making and how to go from data to action.