

# A Healthy Weight for Life

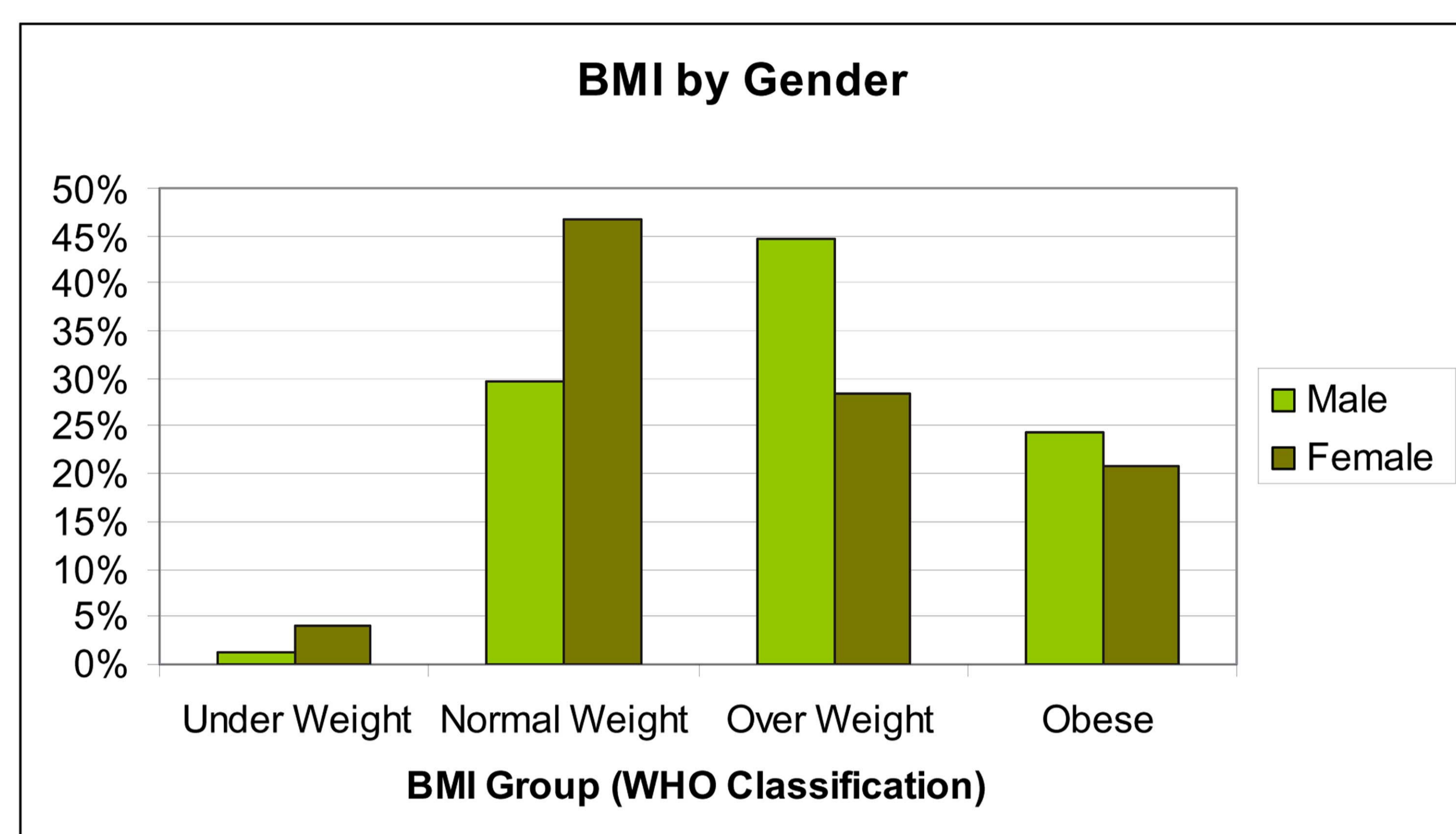
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## Background

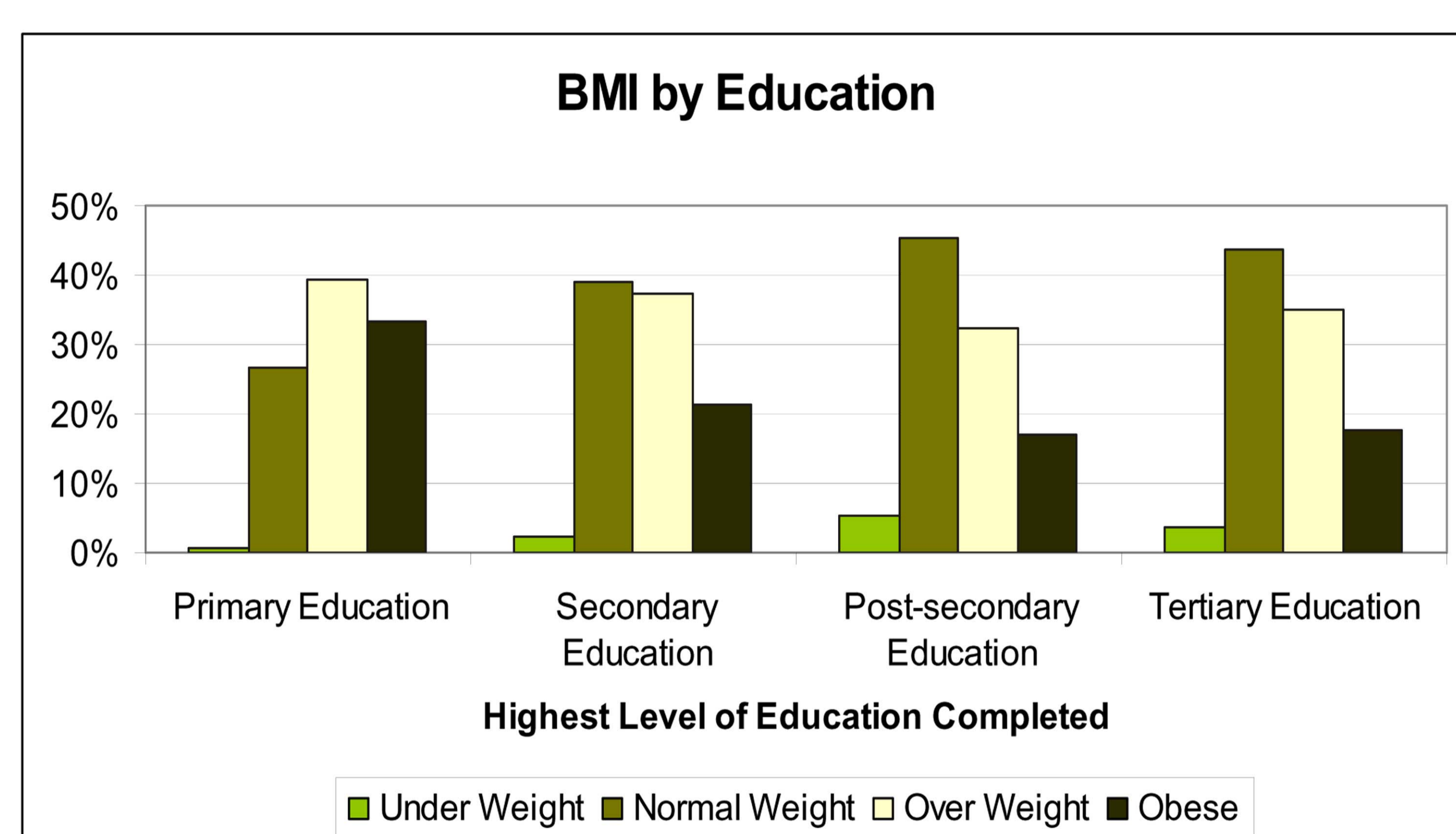
Malta, with a population size of 404,000 has the worst overweight and obesity problem in Europe.

| BMI more than or equal to 25kg/m <sup>2</sup><br>(IOTF criteria in children) |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Men  | 71.9% (self-reported) <sup>1</sup> |
| Women  | 53.2% (self-reported) <sup>1</sup> |
| Boys aged 9 yrs  | 44.4% (measured) <sup>2</sup>      |
| Girls aged 9 yrs   | 39.6% (measured) <sup>2</sup>      |

1: European Health Interview Survey, Health Information and Research Directorate, 2008  
2: Grech V, Farrugia Sant' Angelo V. Body mass index estimation in a school-entry aged cohort in Malta. *Int. Journal of Ped. Obesity*, 2009;4:126-128.



Graph 1: Percentage of adult Maltese population by gender and BMI group European Health Interview Survey, Health Information and Research Directorate, 2008



Graph 2: Percentage of Maltese adult population by BMI category and highest level of education completed. European Health Interview Survey, Health Information and Research Directorate, 2008



National Campaign: Piż tajjeb għal Hajtek! commenced in May 2010 with the following key messages:

- Make healthy choices with regards to food intake
- Prepare and enjoy nutritious foods as a family
- Eat in moderation
- Increase physical activity

Campaign includes:

- Television and radio advertisements
- Dedicated television series
- Aerobics classes (free of charge)
- Weight management classes (free of charge)
- Printed material, website and social media

Evaluation of Media campaign:

Telephone interview to a randomly selected age-stratified sample of 200 adults taken from the National Register

- 44% had heard of campaign against obesity
- 89% recall of television promo
- 59% radio promo
- 54% newspaper promo



Weight management programme:

- The aim is to empower overweight and obese adults to manage their weight through lifestyle and behaviour change to improve poor eating and physical activity habits
- Consists of 9 (2-hour) sessions, with lengthening intervals between sessions
- Groups consist of a maximum of 18 participants
- Groups run by specifically trained health professionals
- 533 individuals currently participating in this programme
- Evaluation identified difficulties in maintaining motivation; as a result, the duration of the programme was reduced without changing the total number of sessions.