Background

Currently, there is no standard approach for deriving micronutrient recommendations and large differences exist both across Europe. Harmonization is needed to improve nutrition policy and public health recommendations and large differences exist both across Europe. The aim of the EURRECA Network of Excellence is to develop a harmonized methodology to set micronutrient requirements.

Results

The work of EURRECA has resulted in the development of a generic scheme (see figure below), consisting of 8 steps, which aims to facilitate the scientific alignment of micronutrient requirements.

Step 1: Establishing criteria of selection
- Identification of which
  - Micronutrient
  - Population group
  - Health outcome

Step 2: Setting up a Committee of experts
- Purpose
- Composition
- Goal

Step 3: Establishing best practice methods
- Assessment:
  - Intake
  - Status
  - Metabolomics

Step 4: Collecting scientific data available
- (Systematic) review procedure
- Intake-status-health
- Bioavailability, interactions
- Factorial estimates
- Inter-individual variability
- ‘Health space’

Step 5: Integrating the evidence into requirements
- Dose-response
- Factorial approach & bioavailability
- Individual variability
- Multiple micronutrients

Step 6: Deriving requirements into reference values
- Factorial approach & bioavailability
- Scaling
- Global approach

Step 7: Identifying the most appropriate policy options
- Criteria for policy instruments
  - Fortification
  - FBDG
  - Behaviour change

Step 8: Implementing policy instruments and evaluating their impact

Policy makers are tasked with choosing policies that will maximize the likelihood of achieving a desired health outcome for the relevant population. Once a policy is implemented, impact assessment enables to assess changes in the nutrition situation that can be attributed in part or wholly to a nutrition policy.

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