Author’s response to reviews

Title: EuropeaN Energy balance Research to prevent excessive weight Gain among Youth (ENERGY) project: Design and methodology of the ENERGY cross sectional survey.

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
EuropeaN Energy balance Research to prevent excessive weight Gain among Youth (ENERGY) project: Design and methodology of the ENERGY cross sectional survey (MS# 5870310704781461)

Dear Dr. Natalie Pafitis,

We would like to thank you for your invitation to resubmit our revised manuscript entitled: “EuropeaN Energy balance Research to prevent excessive weight Gain among Youth (ENERGY) project: Design and methodology of the ENERGY cross sectional survey.” for publication in BMC Public Health.

A detailed point-by-point response to your recommendations is given below. The changes we made in the revised manuscript are printed in bold. We hope that we have duly responded to your recommendations and that the manuscript in its present form merits publication in the BMC Public Health.

With kind regards, on behalf of all co-authors

Maartje van Stralen

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Rebuttal letter

Comments of the editor

Thank you for sending through your approval documentation - we can confirm this is sufficient. Before we are able to proceed with the acceptance of your protocol in the journal, we require that you do the following:

(1) Document the specific names of the committees which granted ethics approval within the methods section of your manuscript.

We have, as suggested, documented the specific names of the committees that granted ethics approval for each country. This part in the methods section now reads:

All participating countries obtained ethical clearance from the relevant ethical committees and ministries; in Belgium the survey was approved by the Medical Ethics Committee of the University Hospital Ghent; in Greece the survey was approved by the Bioethics Committee of Harokopio University, in Hungary the survey was approved by the Scientific and Ethics Committee of Health Sciences Council; in the Netherlands the survey was approved by the Medical Ethics Committee of the VU University medical center; in Norway the survey was approved by the National Committees for Research Ethics in Norway, in Slovenia the survey was approved by the National Medical Ethics Committee of the Republic of Slovenia, and in Spain the survey was approved by Clinical Research Ethics Committee of the Government of Aragón.

(2) Include a power calculation within your manuscript file, used to determine the sample size of your study.

We have now included some information on the difference in overweight rates between countries that we will be able to detect with a power of 90% and assuming an average overweight rate of 15%. Further, one of the main aims of the study is to assess the most important predictors of energy balance related behaviours. For this we will run prediction models using linear regression analyses. With a sample size of 7000 children we will be able to run prediction models with at least 10 to 15 variables. The section in the design section on page 5 now reads:

A total of 7000 observations is sufficient to run prediction models with at least 10 predicting variables. In addition, it was calculated that with a power of 90% a between country difference of 5% in overweight prevalence rates will be detected as a significant difference (assuming an average overweight rate of 15%).

(3) Include a 'Competing interests' section between the Conclusions and Authors' contributions. If there are none to declare, please write 'The authors declare that they have no competing interests'. For the Authors' contributions we suggest the following kind of format (please use initials to refer to each author's contribution): AB carried out the molecular genetic studies, participated in the sequence alignment and drafted the manuscript. JY carried out the immunoassays. MT participated in the sequence alignment. ES participated in the design of the study and performed the statistical analysis. FG conceived of the study, and participated in its design and coordination. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

We have included a section on the Competing interests of the authors and the Authors’ contributions. These sections now read:
COMPETING INTERESTS
The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

AUTHOR’S CONTRIBUTION
STV and JB developed the concept and design of the ENERGY study. MVS, STV and JB drafted the manuscript. All other co-authors have been involved in the development, coordination and/or implementation of the ENERGY survey. All authors have read and approved the manuscript.