

Development of a toolkit to support food and alcoholic beverages marketing restrictions in the EU

Introduction

Addressing all forms of marketing of foods, non-alcoholic and/or alcoholic beverages that promote unhealthy diets and practices to children and adolescents has been identified as an area of urgent action in the public health policy arena. The issue is usually tackled via a combination of statutory legislation and self-regulation by relevant stakeholders, either in the form of generic marketing codes or with codes specific to foods, non-alcoholic and/or alcoholic beverages. At EU level, the Audiovisual Media Services (AVMS) Directive is currently under revision and its transposition at national level is seen as an opportunity to expand, re-inforce or introduce effective measures in this area.

Methods

A database was developed to map both statutory and self-regulatory marketing codes that are in place in the EU and beyond. The following aspects were examined: general characteristics, scope, target audience, addressed marketing techniques, included measures, as well as information on implementation, monitoring and evaluation. To ensure completeness, the High Level Group on Nutrition and Physical Activity (HLG) and the Committee on National Action and Policy on Alcohol (CNAPA) were consulted at different stages. An expert workshop further fed the development of the different parts of the toolkit.

Results

A total of 53 codes were included and analysed in the database. Thirty three codes have food and non-alcoholic beverages related measures, while 31 have alcohol-related measures. The thorough analysis of the codes led to the development of a marketing code template which includes all aspects and characteristics that a marketing code could potentially cover. The template follows the structure used for analysing the codes in the database and can be used by policy makers to make sure that no important aspects are overlooked or under-developed, e.g. during the code creation, update, transposition in national legislation etc. The template is complemented by an inventory containing the breadth of available specific actions. The toolkit includes additional reflections on the potential implementation of specific proposals for restricting marketing to children. Finally, the toolkit discusses digital marketing, the challenges it poses when trying to restrict marketing to children and offers some potential solutions.

Conclusion

The toolkit will support policy makers in designing or updating their national food, non-alcoholic and/or alcoholic beverage marketing restriction policies. Practical technical guidance will be provided in the form of a marketing code template and an inventory of specific actions.

Institution

DG Joint Research Centre, European Commission

Country

Italy

Primary author: GRAMMATIKAKI, Evangelia (Joint Research Centre)

Co-authors: Ms MARGARITA KOKKOROU, Margarita; Ms RENEDO, Ana Sarasa; Mr MARAGKOUidakis, Petros; Mr CARDOSO, Rafael; Ms CALDEIRA, Sandra; WOLLGAST, Jan

Presenter: GRAMMATIKAKI, Evangelia (Joint Research Centre)

Session Classification: Poster Session 3