

The background of the slide is a collage of various dairy products. In the top left, there is a white, textured surface, possibly a piece of cheese or a yogurt container. To the right, a slice of blue cheese with dark blue veins is shown on a blue surface. Below it, a wedge of yellow cheese with a grid pattern is visible. In the bottom left, there is a white container of butter with a silver spoon. In the bottom right, there is a piece of white cheese with a dark, possibly moldy, rind. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white box in the center-left of the image.

From Brussels to Greece: EU Food Policy Priorities Shaping the Future of the Dairy Sector

5 June 2026, The Dairy Conference, Athens

Kinga Adamaszwili

Deputy Secretary General

European Dairy Association (EDA)

Overview

- EDA structure & regulatory priorities
- Key EU policy debates impacting dairy (UPFs, sugar taxes, sustainable nutrition)





EDA structure & regulatory priorities



EDA structure

EDA members



- Association of national dairy industry associations of **20 EU Member States**, the **UK** and **Georgia**
- **Cooperative** and **private** milk processors
- Representing **95%** of milk processed in the EU

CONNECT
TO THE
WORLD
OF DAIRY



“The role of the European Dairy Association in ensuring that the voice of your stakeholders is heard in Europe is key. I look forward to continuing our close cooperation to ensure that dairy has a promising future in Europe.”

Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission



EDA Leadership: Presidium of the Board

EDA President:



Albert de Groot, Vreugdenhil (NL)

EDA Vice-Presidents:



Ingo Müller, DMK (DE)



Gilles Gérard, Luxlait (LU)

EDA Leadership: Greece in the Board



EDA President:



Albert de Groot, Vreugdenhil (NL)

EDA Vice-Presidents:



Ingo Müller, DMK (DE)



Gilles Gérard, Luxlait (LU)

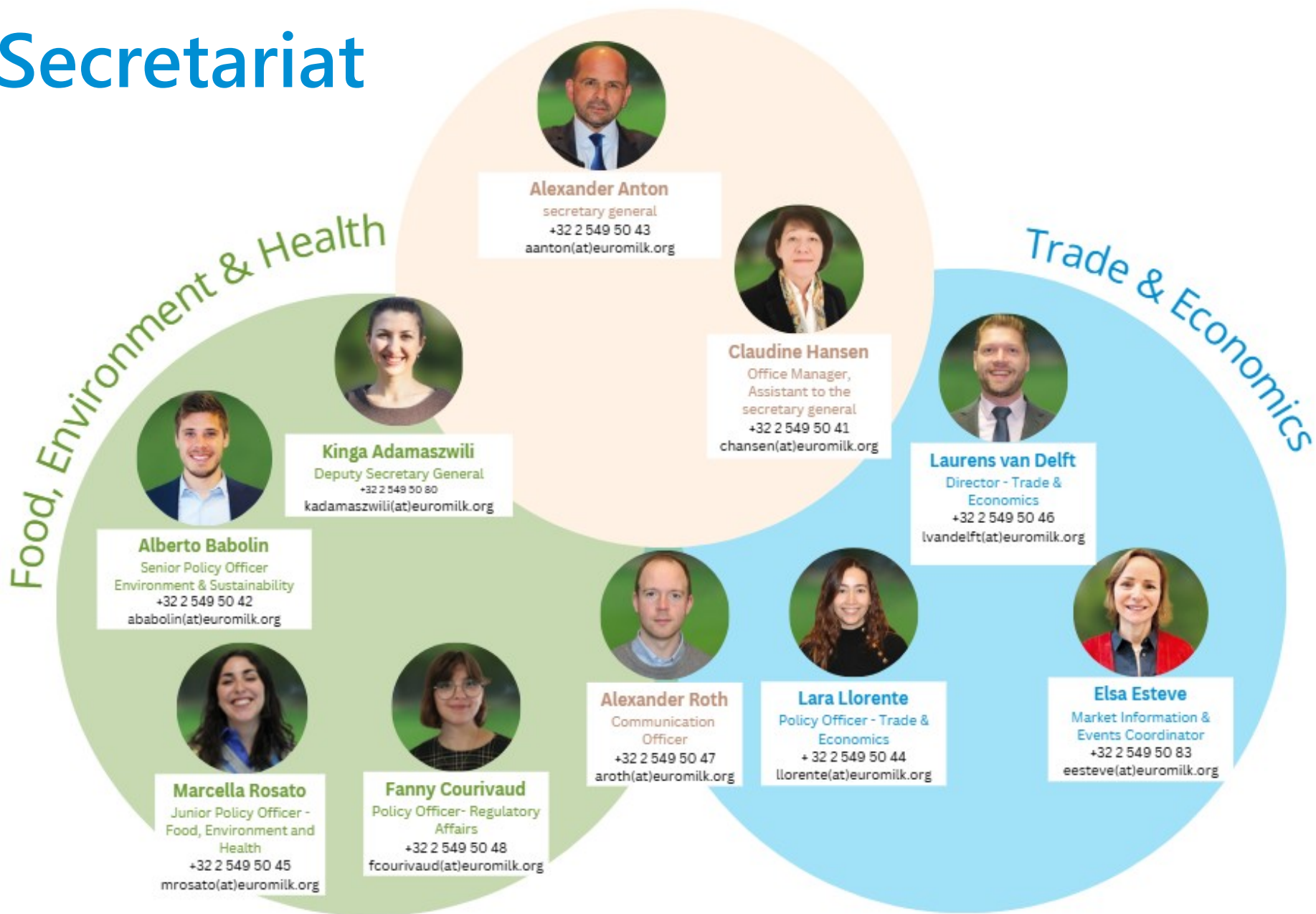


ΣΕΒ•ΓΑΠ



Dr. Christos Apostolopoulos
SEVGAP
Hellenic Association of Milk
& Dairy Products Industry

EDA Secretariat



EDA regulatory priorities

- **Labelling** (front of pack, origin, protected dairy terms, GIs)
- **Ingredients** (additives, enzymes, flavourings) → incl. data submission to EFSA
- **Contaminants** → incl. data submission to EFSA
- **Food safety** (including hygiene, official controls, animal diseases)
- **Sustainability & Environment**
- **Nutrition & Health**



EDA stakeholders' network

EU Institutions - EDA is an official member of:

- EU Commission DG SANTE Advisory Group on the Sustainability of Food Systems
- EU Commission DG SANTE Advisory Committee on Animal Health and EU Platform on Animal Welfare
- EU Commission DG AGRI Civil Dialogue Group Milk
- EU Commission DG ENVI Civil Dialogue Group Environment & Climate Change
- Member of the Economic Board of the Milk Market Observatory
- Member of the Expert Group on European Food Security Crisis Preparedness and Response Mechanism
- Economic board of the Milk Market Observatory to the stakeholder network
- Expert group on food security and crisis preparedness
- EFSA Stakeholder Forum
- EFSA Discussion Group on Chemical Occurrence Data
- EFSA Discussion Group on Emerging Risks
- Registered in the EU Transparency Register which allows us to meet with the EU Commission and MEPs



European Parliament

EDA advocacy for the EU dairy sector



EDA Annual Convention and EDA Policy Conference & Cheese Buffet



European Dairy Association
5,327 followers
2mo • Edited •

Our Dairy Policy Conference has officially been opened by our President, **Albert de Groot**.
"Food is not just a commodity. Food is stability, food is dignity, and in today's world, food is a peace-making force. In a rapidly changing world, we must not forget that EU dairy products are a strategic asset for Europe's global position. Many countries rely on our high-quality, safe, and sustainable products for their food security and nutritional needs."

Today's will focus on how our EU Dairy Strategy can support a competitive, resilient, and sustainable dairy sector, while addressing key challenges in agri-food policy, international trade, and global food security.

"That's why our sector is not just economic — it is strategic," - President **Albert de Groot**.

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Rui Baptista • 1st
Regulatory and Public Affairs South Euro... 2mo

EDA always talking about pertinent topics to increase global awareness on the importance of dairy and its nutritional benefits.



European Dairy Association
5,327 followers
6mo •

The Annual Dairy Convention 2025 is in full swing!

We're kicking off with a warm welcome from **Albert de Groot**, EDA President, and **Mireille Einwachter** President of **Nederlandse Zuivel Organisatie - NZO** (Dutch Dairy Association).

Albert de Groot: "European dairy remains essential in feeding billions with high-quality, nutritious and sustainable food. Our sector shows remarkable resilience and global leadership even in volatile times, driven by the people who innovate and keep the value chain strong. We must continue seizing opportunities, reinforcing our supply chain and investing in progress. Dairy has a strong future in Europe, and together we will keep shaping it with ambition and confidence."

Mireille Einwachter: "Our is built on collaboration, innovation and generations of craftsmanship. Dairy supports tens of thousands of jobs and is central to our economy and communities. Across Europe we face shared challenges and opportunities, and our strength lies in working together. With unity and ambition, that the dairy sector cannot solve to build a sustainable future."

#FutureDairy

EDA advocacy for the EU dairy sector



Meeting EU Commissioner for Health and Animal Welfare Oliver Varhelyi



Meeting EU Commissioner for Agriculture and Food Christophe Hansen

EDA advocacy for the EU dairy sector



European Parliament



European Dairy Association

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EDA's Deputy Secretary General **Kinga Adamaszwili** addressed the AGRI Committee MEPs at the hearing on the EU livestock sector.

She highlighted that the European dairy sector is a pillar of nutrition, sustainability and rural economies — and a global leader in safe, high-quality food. But recent animal disease outbreaks, growing trade uncertainties, and geopolitical shifts remind us how vulnerable the sector can be.

The upcoming EU Livestock Strategy is a key opportunity to send a strong political signal of support — recognising the nutritional and economic value of dairy, strengthening competitiveness, ensuring strong animal health systems, and securing access to global markets.

The dairy sector stands ready to work with policymakers to remain resilient, sustainable and ready for future generations.

Watch the full hearing here: <https://lnkd.in/eGQy8qed>

#EuropeanDairyAssociation #EULivestock
#FoodSecurity #Nutrition #AnimalHealth #EUAgri
#EP

EDA advocacy for the EU dairy sector



European Dairy Association

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EDA had the pleasure of attending the 2025 edition of [European Food Safety Authority \(EFSA\)](#)'s Stakeholder Forum which took place in Brussels on the 24th of November.

Each year, the Forum is an excellent occasion to engage directly with EFSA in a constructive dialogue. This year, the focus was on how to further advance EU risk assessment and support EFSA in delivering faster outcomes while maintaining trust, independence and the highest standards of EFSA scientific opinions.

In the afternoon, three breakout sessions were organised to discuss more in depth the following topics:

- Developing tailored guidance documents for applicants
- Facilitating data submission processes and harmonizing future data formats across the EU agencies
- Accelerating the assessment of innovative products

EDA's Deputy Secretary General, [Kinga Adamaszwili](#) moderated the second breakout session on unlocking the full potential of data and took part in a panel discussion to report back on the excellent dialogue that took place.

EDA advocacy for the EU dairy sector



Alexander Anton • 1st
Secretary General at euromilk.org (EDA, EWPA...
1mo •



Today, **European Dairy Association** (EDA) was proud to co-host with the The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (**FAO**) a high-level private sector dialogue at our Brussels offices on the sustainability, resilience, and financing of agrifood systems.

The consultation supported coordinated European private sector contributions to the next FAO Regional Conference for Europe (ERC35), taking place in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, from 11–15 May 2026, and provided an opportunity to discuss the FAO Strategy for Private Sector Engagement 2026–2030.

The new FAO Strategy for Private Sector Engagement sends clear signal for more flexible and market-responsive approach while FAO is staying true to its mission on agrifood sustainability and food security.

It is the first time a FAO policy consultation is officially co-hosted by a private sector organisation and as the EU dairy sector, we are very proud of our long-standing cooperation with FAO, including on projects on the ground, and it is for good reasons that FAO celebrates every year the World Milk Day, even though it has not yet been officialised by the United Nations.

A huge thank you to our partners:

with Raschad Al-Khafaji

EDA advocacy for the EU dairy sector



European Dairy Association

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6mo • 🌐

At the official COP30 Side Event in Belém, co-hosted with the [International Dairy Federation](#) | [Fédération Internationale du Lait](#), [Dairy Farmers of Canada](#) | [Les Producteurs laitiers du Canada](#) and [International Meat Secretariat](#), EDA's [Alberto Babolin](#) showed how innovation cuts dairy's climate footprint and called for supportive policies and finance to scale these solutions.





Key EU policy debates impacting dairy





Ultra-processed foods (UPFs)



Ultra-processed foods (UPFs)

- The term "ultra-processed food" gained prominence from a 2009 paper by Brazilian researchers as part of the Nova classification system
- The Nova definition considers **ingredients, processing,** and how products are marketed; **nutritional content is not evaluated**
- In the Nova system, UPFs include **yogurt, milk drinks,** and **cheese**
- As of 2026, research into the effects of UPFs is rapidly evolving, but still inconsistent and insufficient to be a good compass for dietary recommendations and food policies
- **There is no universally accepted definition of high or ultra-processed foods**



Ultra-processed foods (UPFs)

First time UPFs were mentioned in EU policy making: February 2025, EU Vision for Agriculture and Food



primary producers, industry, retailers, public authorities and civil society. This dialogue would be the forum to address pressing issues such as food reformulation, collection of data on dietary intake and food affordability, just to name a few. To support this dialogue, the Commission will launch a study on the impact of the consumption of the so-called 'ultra-processed foods'.

Ultra-processed foods (UPFs) ... and Cardiovascular Diseases (CVD)



Your **heart** matters,
let's keep it **safe!**



December 2025

EU COM publishes
EU Safe Hearts Plan



linking CVD and
"Ultra-Processed
Foods"

Q1-Q2 2026

EU COM working on defining
the **scope of the EU study** on
"Ultra-Processed Foods" and
human health

2027

Expected publication
of the EU study on
UPFs



uniting dairy excellence & ambition

Ultra-processed foods (UPFs)

Potential future EU policy actions



Flagship initiative: empowering consumers through information on food processing in the EU

The Commission will work towards a new comprehensive food processing assessment system, looking into portions, frequency of intake and role in the diet, to empower consumers with transparent, accessible, science-based digital information on food processing, with the aim to ultimately encourage shifts towards healthier diets.



Flagship initiative: based on the outcome of the study on so-called 'ultra-processed foods', the Commission will examine which appropriate tools, including possible financial actions, could be deployed to support/fund public health actions in the field of primary prevention and stimulate food reformulation and healthier consumer choices.

Ultra-processed foods (UPFs)

EDA Position

- **Food processing technologies** contribute to food safety, nutritional quality, accessibility and convenience
- Most dairy products are **minimally or moderately processed**, and produced through traditional processes
- Dairy products are widely recognised in **national dietary guidelines** and contribute to public health objectives, including **prevention of CVD** (neutral or beneficial effects on blood cholesterol, obesity and type 2 diabetes)
- Some dairy products are classified as “UPFs” despite positive health evidence - this creates a **disconnection between scientific evidence and classification systems**
- **We recommend a science-driven, balanced approach to support healthier diets**





Sugar Taxes



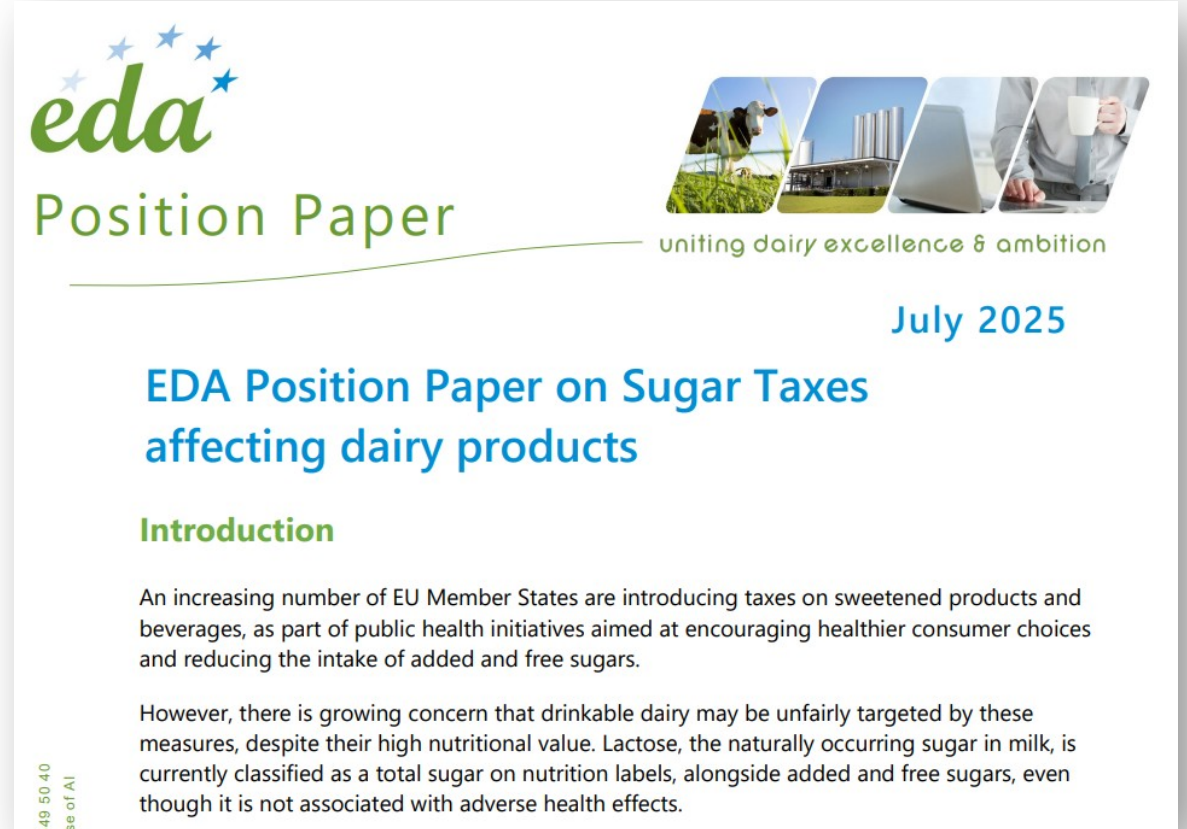
Sugar Taxes

- An increasing number of EU Member States are introducing taxes on sugar sweetened drinks and foods – **often including sweetened dairy products** - as part of public health initiatives aimed at encouraging healthier consumer choices and reducing the intake of added and free sugars



Sugar Taxes

- EDA maintains that dairy products, including drinkable dairy, **should be excluded from food taxation policies**
- **Dairy provides essential nutrients** critical to a balanced diet for both children and adults and **should remain affordable** for all households



The image shows the cover page of an EDA Position Paper. At the top left is the EDA logo, which consists of the word 'eda' in a green, lowercase, sans-serif font with five blue stars of varying sizes above it. To the right of the logo is a horizontal strip of four small images: a cow in a field, a modern dairy processing plant, a person's hands typing on a laptop, and a person holding a white mug. Below the strip is the tagline 'uniting dairy excellence & ambition' in a smaller green font. The title 'Position Paper' is written in a large, green, sans-serif font. Below the title, the date 'July 2025' is written in a blue, sans-serif font. The main title of the paper, 'EDA Position Paper on Sugar Taxes affecting dairy products', is written in a large, blue, sans-serif font. Below the title is the word 'Introduction' in a green, sans-serif font. The text of the introduction is in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. At the bottom left of the page, there is a small, vertical, green text string '349 50 40' and 'se of AI'.

eda
Position Paper

uniting dairy excellence & ambition

July 2025

**EDA Position Paper on Sugar Taxes
affecting dairy products**

Introduction

An increasing number of EU Member States are introducing taxes on sweetened products and beverages, as part of public health initiatives aimed at encouraging healthier consumer choices and reducing the intake of added and free sugars.

However, there is growing concern that drinkable dairy may be unfairly targeted by these measures, despite their high nutritional value. Lactose, the naturally occurring sugar in milk, is currently classified as a total sugar on nutrition labels, alongside added and free sugars, even though it is not associated with adverse health effects.

349 50 40
se of AI

Sugar Taxes

European dairy processors are committed to reducing the content of added sugars in their products



Within the period 2017-2023, Slovenian dairy producers achieved a 8.6% reduction in sugar content in sweetened dairy products.



Spanish dairy processors have reduced the amount of added sugars by an average of 21% in regular dairy products (yoghurts, fresh cheese...) and by 11% on average in indulgence products (rice pudding, egg custard...) from 2016 to 2024.



Belgian dairy processors have achieved a 15% reduction of added sugars in their products between 2012 and 2021.



Italian dairy processors have reduced the amount of added sugars in yogurts and fermented milks by 19% between 2011 and 2017.



German dairy processors have reduced the amount of added sugars in yogurts marketed to children by 20% between 2016 and 2022. In addition, the amount of sugar in milk drinks for children was reduced by 12% between 2019 and 2022.

Source: [EDA Position Paper on Sugar Taxes](#)



- Dairy processors across the EU are **committed to reducing added sugar** in their products, including those intended for children
- When implementing sugar taxes, it is crucial to **differentiate between naturally occurring sugars**, such as lactose in milk, and added sugars
- Milk and products made of milk are **considered as a 'food', and not a 'drink'**, because of their excellent nutritional value – and therefore should be excluded from 'sugar-sweetened beverages' taxation
- **Milk and dairy products, including sweetened ones, are nutrient-rich foods that need to remain affordable for the European families**



Sugar Taxes

EDA welcomed the EU Commission's final report on "Health taxes from an EU perspective" which recognises the role of dairy products in the diet and states that **a potential EU-harmonised sugar-sweetened beverage tax should exclude these categories** to avoid undermining their health benefits

According to this perspective, sugar-sweetened milk-based products (CN codes 0402) could be taxed. However, currently, several Member States exclude such drinks, because milk itself is seen as an element of a balanced diet, particularly for children. Likewise, fruit juices (CN codes 2009) are also often excluded by Member States. While fruit juices are a source of free sugars with little fibre, they also provide micronutrients at levels similar to those found in whole fruit. Therefore, **for both sugar-sweetened milk-based products** and fruit juices there are concerns about the sugar intake and balancing this with any potential beneficial health effects. Therefore, in the proposed scenarios it remains at the Member States' discretion to include such products in the taxable scope, **a potential EU-harmonised SSB tax should not include them.**





Sustainable nutrition



Sustainable nutrition

Farm to Fork Strategy 2020

- The Farm to Fork Strategy published in 2020 in the context of the European Green Deal, was aiming to make food systems fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly
- The strategy set out both regulatory and non-regulatory initiatives, most of them proved to be **highly controversial** and were put **“on hold”** (e.g. mandatory FOP nutritional labelling, origin labelling, green claims)



Sustainable nutrition

- EDA remains a strong advocate of the role of **dairy in sustainable nutrition**
- Dairy products play a vital role in providing **essential nutrients (including high quality protein, vitamins and minerals)** that are difficult to obtain from plant sources alone
- Currently, calculations of **environmental footprints** are based on the outcome of Life-Cycle Assessments (LCAs) ending up with a footprint expressed per kilogram of product
- However, consumers do not eat kilograms but whole foods
- EDA believes that **nutritional LCA (nLCA)** is a better methodology as it **combines environmental and nutritional** analysis to better assess dietary sustainability
- Rather than eliminating dairy, sustainable diets should prioritise plant-sourced foods while incorporating appropriate amounts of dairy to **prevent nutrient deficiencies**



See: [EDA Factsheet on Complementary Role of Dairy and Plant Foods](#)



Conclusions



Conclusions



- EU food policy is increasingly shaped by the intersection of health, sustainability and food systems
- Key debates (including ultra-processed foods, sugar taxation, sustainable diets) evolve rapidly and influence regulators
- Simplified approaches to food classification risk overlook nutritional value and food diversity
- **Effective policy should remain science-based, proportionate and evidence-driven**
- **Dairy has a key role to play in delivering nutrient-dense, accessible and sustainable nutrition**



Thank you for your attention

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