

Contact: **Elisavet Sergiadou: +32 (0)2 789 24 01**
Date: **15/06/2015**

Nutrient profiles in danger

In Europe today, the food and drink industry can legally use health and nutrition claims on their products, including biscuits, sugary snacks and confectionary, provided that vitamins or minerals are added to the product.



The 2006 EU Nutrition and Health Claims Regulation included a reference to "nutrient profiles", which would determine which products can and cannot use the claims based on their overall nutritional value. Specifically, nutrient profiles would ensure that only products which meet certain criteria, for instance maximum levels of sugar, salt or fat, could refer to health benefits on their package.

Nevertheless, although the Commission had to define those nutrient profiles by 2009, they were never implemented.

BEUC and its members have been calling on the EU Commission to come up with a set of strict nutrient profiles since then.

The EU institutions¹ are now re-evaluating the Regulation. Tomorrow, the Parliament's Legal Affairs committee will vote on whether the Commission should consider repealing the Regulation and whether nutrient profiles should ever see the light of day².

Monique Goyens, BEUC's Director General commented:

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/andriukaitis/announcements/letter-eu-ministers-agriculture-food-safety_en

- http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/better_regulation/documents/com_2015_215_en.pdf

- See also BEUC letter to Commissioner Andriukaitis http://www.beuc.org/publications/beuc-x-2015-051_letter_to_commissioner_andriukaitis_on_botanicals_and_nutrient_profiles.pdf

² The Legal Affairs committee will vote a resolution on the so-called REFIT (Regulatory Fitness and Performance) programme. The purpose of REFIT is to check if existing regulations need to be reviewed or slimmed down.

“The European Commission should ensure that consumers are not misled by unhealthy foods making spurious health claims and should implement the EU Nutrition and Health Claims Regulation in its entirety by developing nutrient profiles.

“Members of the Parliament’s Legal Affairs Committee should vigorously dismiss the call to scrap the concept of nutrient profiles. EU laws on health and nutrition claims should not fall victim to an effort of reducing ‘red tape’.

“Discarding the EU Nutrition and Health Claims Regulation would be a daunting signal that ‘better regulation’ puts essential public interest measures at risk”.

ENDS