



The Consumer Voice in Europe

Mr Stéphane Séjourné
Executive Vice-President
Prosperity and Industrial Strategy

Mr Christophe Hansen
Commissioner
Agriculture and Food
European Commission

9 December 2025

Subject: EU Cardiovascular Health Plan

Dear Executive Vice-President Séjourné,
Dear Commissioner Hansen,

I am writing to you on behalf of BEUC, The European Consumer Organisation, to stress the importance of ensuring that the forthcoming Cardiovascular Health Plan prioritises the health and wellbeing of European consumers. To this end, it is essential that the Plan introduces measures to foster healthy diets.

The [World Health Organisation repeatedly stressed that Cardiovascular diseases \(CVD\)](#) remain the largest contributor to preventable deaths and disability across the EU. A substantial share of this burden is linked to poor diets, including insufficient consumption of fruits, vegetables, whole grains and legumes, and excessive intake of sugar, salt, saturated fats and ultra-processed products. Improving diets is therefore one of the most effective and cost-efficient actions to reduce not only cardiovascular diseases but also type 2 diabetes, several cancers, and the resulting health inequalities.

Recent discussions on foods high in fat, sugar and salt (HFSS), as well as on ultra-processed foods (UPFs), highlight a growing recognition that tackling these products is essential to improving consumer health. However, this represents only half of what is needed, as measures aimed at decreasing intake of HFSS and UPFs must go hand in hand with actions that make healthier foods more accessible and more affordable for everyone.

First and foremost, the EU should prioritise reducing the cost of healthy, minimally processed foods. Lowering VAT on fruits, vegetables, legumes, whole grains and other nutrient-dense products would improve affordability and help shift purchasing patterns towards healthier diets. Targeted price-support measures for low-income households and policies that reduce the cost of staple ingredients would further reinforce this shift. This could go together with other fiscal measures to target HFSS/UPFs.

Significant improvements can also be achieved by:

- i) Setting mandatory product-reformulation standards, with clear limits on salt, added sugars, saturated fats and other harmful nutrients;
- ii) Implementing strong restrictions on the marketing and advertising of HFSS and ultra-processed foods to children, across digital, broadcast and physical environments;
- iii) Strengthening public procurement standards to ensure that schools, hospitals, workplaces and public institutions serve nutritious, minimally processed meals

Taken together, these measures would form a coherent, ambitious strategy: making healthy foods cheaper and easier to choose, while reducing the prevalence and appeal of products that drive cardiovascular disease. This dual approach is essential for creating healthier food environments and improving the wellbeing of all European consumers.

As Commission services put the finishing touches on the Cardiovascular Health Plan, we recommend maintaining a high level of ambition in promoting healthy diets, as addressing cardiovascular diseases is a necessary step toward improving the health of European consumers.

Yours sincerely,

Agustín Reyna
Director General