



Monitoring Report



2015/2016/2017 Results



About the EU Pledge

The EU Pledge is a voluntary initiative launched by leading food and beverage companies to change food and beverage advertising to children under the age of twelve in the European Union.

The EU Pledge is a commitment made in December 2007 to the European Union Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, the multi-stakeholder forum set up by the European Commission in 2005 to encourage stakeholders to take initiatives aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles in Europe.

EU Pledge member companies represent over 80% of the food and beverage advertising spend in the EU. Signatories commit to changing the way they advertise to children under 12 years old through the following two central commitments:

- **No advertising of products to children under 12 years, except for products which fulfil common nutrition criteria.**
- **No communication related to products in primary schools, except where specifically requested by, or agreed with, the school administration for educational purposes.**

The self-regulatory approach of the EU Pledge is in line with the EU Strategy on Nutrition, overweight and obesity-related health conditions, as well as the EU Audiovisual Media Services Directive, which calls on the Member States to encourage codes of conduct on audiovisual commercial communications for food and beverage products directed at children. The European Commission has welcomed the EU Pledge initiative on many occasions.

Enhanced commitments 2012 & 2017

The EU Pledge **was reinforced significantly in 2012:**

- a. “Advertising to children <12”, previously defined as advertising to media audiences with >50% children <12, is now based on a **tougher min. threshold, at 35%**. This means that more media channels are off limits.
- b. **Company-owned websites are covered** in addition to 3rd party internet advertising. This means that company-owned websites for products that do not meet better-for-you criteria shall not be designed to appeal primarily to children <12.
- c. In November 2012, the EU Pledge announced **common nutrition criteria** for companies which so far have used company-specific criteria to determine what foods they may advertise to children under 12. These companies (13 out of 22) apply the criteria – which are overall more stringent than individual criteria used before – since 1 January 2015 across the EU.

The EU Pledge **was then reinforced significantly in 2017:**

- a. **Extension of scope:** The EU Pledge commitment was extended to cover not only TV, print, third-party internet and company-owned websites, but also radio, cinema, DVD/CD-ROM, direct marketing, product placement, interactive games, apps, mobile and SMS marketing.
- b. **Addressing creative execution:** Where no reliable audience measurement data is available, the new commitments ensure that advertisers consider not only the placement, but also the overall impression of the marketing communication, to ensure that if the product in question does not meet the common nutrition criteria, the communication is not designed to appeal primarily to children.¹

¹ Further information about the enhanced commitments can be found here: <http://www.eu-pledge.eu/content/enhanced-2014-commitments>

Monitoring Results

The monitoring exercises carried out in 2015, 2016 and 2017 by the following independent third parties:

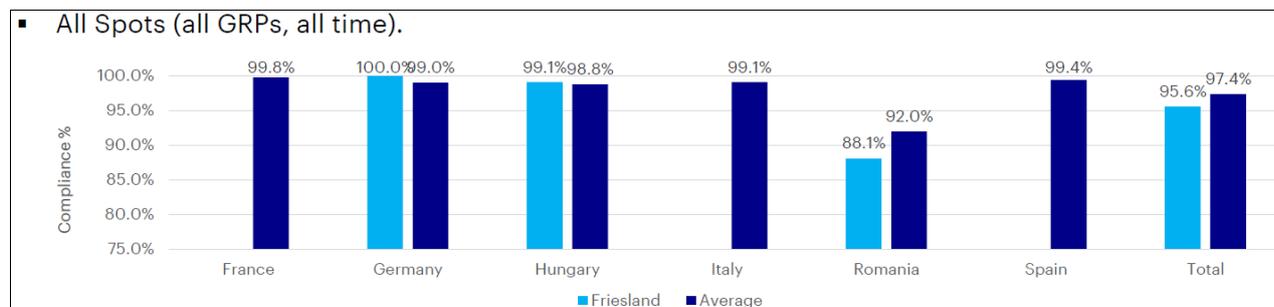
- Accenture Media Management², to review EU Pledge member companies' compliance with the commitment relating to TV advertising;
- EASA – The European Advertising Standards Alliance, to review EU Pledge companies' branded websites, for compliance with the EU Pledge commitment.

Key results for FrieslandCampina

TV advertising compliance

2017: All TV advertising by EU Pledge member companies on French, German, Hungarian, Romanian and Spanish channels during the period January-March 2017 was reviewed by Accenture.

FrieslandCampina overall compliance rate with the EU Pledge was 95.6%, slightly below the average for the six EU markets monitored (97.4%).



The reason FrieslandCampina fared relatively less well than in previous years is that many FrieslandCampina spots recorded by Accenture during the monitored period were aired in Romania where the audience data (children under 12 vs adults) was found to be unreliable. This affected the results of all EU Pledge members who aired in Romania. Indeed, among the 15 457 FrieslandCampina spots recorded, 4933 (32%) appeared on Romanian TV.

Anomalies were found in the Romanian panel 4-11 years old, where the representation was often small or based on an estimation rather than actual audience data. The implication according to Accenture is a likely overstatement of non-compliance in this market with respect to the EU Pledge commitment.

2016: All TV advertising by EU Pledge member companies on French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish and Estonian channels during the period January-March 2016 was reviewed by Accenture.

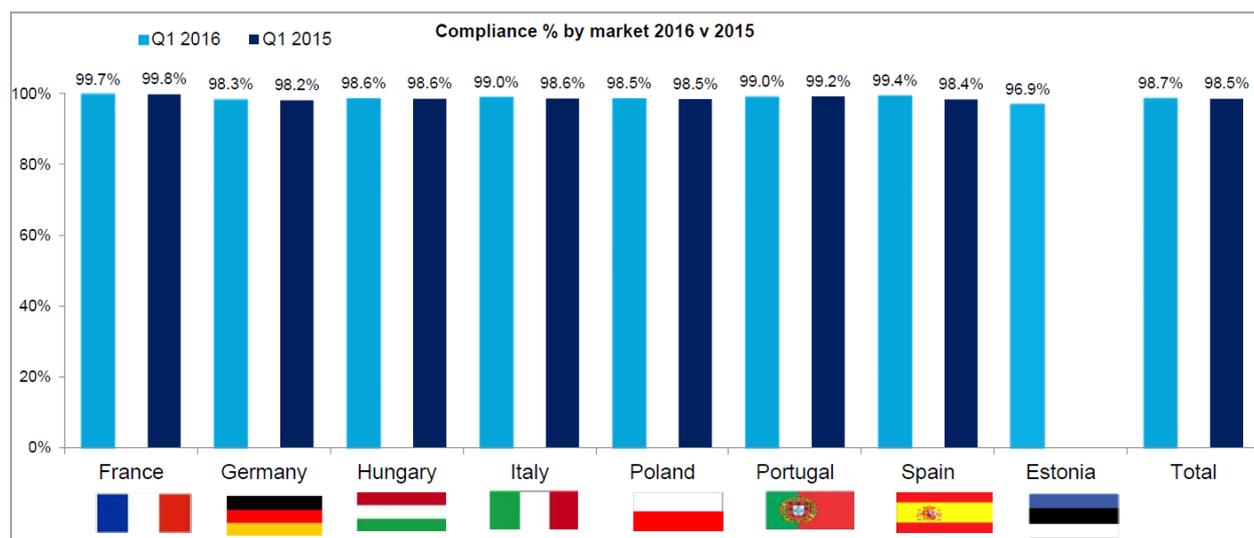
FrieslandCampina overall compliance rate with the EU Pledge was 98.6%, in line with the average for the seven EU markets monitored in 2016 (98.7%).

2015: All TV advertising by EU Pledge member companies on French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Polish, Portuguese and Spanish channels during the period January-March 2015 was reviewed by Accenture.

FrieslandCampina overall compliance rate with the EU Pledge was 98.4%, in line with the average for the eight EU markets monitored in 2015 (98.5%).

² Accenture is a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company. Accenture Media Management helps companies measure and optimise investments in marketing, media, retail and digital.

2015 vs 2016 Compliance % per market



Company-owned website and social media profile compliance

In 2017, EASA reviewed 224 websites, including 13 belonging to FrieslandCampina and 107 social media pages (YouTube, Facebook and Instagram), including 6 which belonged to FrieslandCampina, in six EU markets (Bulgaria, France, Germany, Hungary, Spain and the Netherlands). FrieslandCampina's compliance was **100%** as none of the FrieslandCampina websites or social media profiles were found to be in breach of the commitment. Overall, the compliance rate for all members' company-owned websites was 99%; the compliance rate for social media profiles was 98%.

All 8 websites reviewed in 2015 and all 9 websites reviewed in 2016 belonging to FrieslandCampina were found to be compliant with the EU Pledge. In 2015, the average compliance rate for the 219 websites monitored across the EU (eight countries) was 97%. In 2016, the average compliance rate for the 250 websites monitored across the EU (ten countries) was 95%.

Change measurement

In addition to verifying compliance, EU Pledge member companies commission Accenture to measure the change in the balance of their food and beverage advertising to children (i.e. change in exposure of children under 12 to advertising of foods that meet/do not meet the nutrition criteria) as a result of the EU Pledge and individual company commitments made within the framework and in the spirit of the EU Pledge.

The results reported by Accenture show a decline in children's exposure to ads for products that do not meet companies' nutritional criteria between 2009 and 2014. This is visible on the basis of both change measurement parameters chosen, namely:

- A very substantial reduction in children's exposure to advertising for products that do not meet nutrition criteria through children's programmes (>35% <12 audiences): **-83% in average over all markets monitored over 6 years.**
- A reduction in children's exposure to advertising for products that do not meet nutrition criteria in all programmes: **-48% in average over all markets monitored over 6 years.**

Next steps

After nine years of independent third-party monitoring, the EU Pledge has been able to demonstrate a high level of member companies' compliance with their commitments, as well as a significant change in the balance of food advertising to children in the EU towards options that meet common nutrition criteria. The membership of the initiative has also grown from 11 to 21 member companies, to cover over 80% of food and beverage advertising spend in the EU.

The EU Pledge is a dynamic initiative. While it provides a common framework, member companies can make commitments that go beyond it, and several such as FrieslandCampina do. Since its launch, most of the founding member companies have stepped up their corporate commitments, tightening the way they define advertising to children, broadening the scope of their actions and strengthening the nutrition criteria.

In the same spirit and following constructive dialogue with stakeholders, the EU Pledge enhanced its framework voluntary commitments in 2012 and 2017, applicable to all members throughout the EU.

The decision announced in 2017 to strengthen the common nutrition criteria by further reducing the sugar and sodium thresholds for several categories by the end of 2018 follows the same line.

The 2017 monitoring programme has shown that member companies were able to achieve high compliance levels with the enhanced commitments. The ongoing improvement in compliance rates for company-owned websites and social media profiles evidences members' commitment to the EU Pledge and points to the usefulness of the implementation guidance³ released in 2016.

In 2017, the EU Pledge also announced the development of an **accountability mechanism** to allow members of the public to question the compliance of members' marketing communications with the EU Pledge commitment.

The system, developed in partnership with EASA and inspired by SROs' best practice at national level, will be launched in 2018 and presented to the EU Platform for Diet Physical Activity and Health.

³ The EU Pledge implementation guidance report is available here: http://eu-pledge.eu/sites/eu-pledge.eu/files/misc/Implementation_Guidance_Report.pdf