

# Public Health Product Tax in Hungary



Ministry of Human Capacities, State Secretariat for Health, Hungary

Source reference:  
Call for best practices on healthy and sustainable food systems

## Practice description:

- Cardiovascular diseases and cancer are the leading causes of death in the Hungarian population, with high rates of obesity and overweight in adults and children. The Hungarian Government has launched a complex set of nutritional-health measures, including the law on the public health product tax in 2011.
- The tax is levied on prepackaged foods, especially confectioneries, soft drinks, energy drinks, salty snacks, alcopops, jams, containing salt, sugar and other ingredients exceeding a threshold value.
- The specific health aim of the tax to support healthy eating habits and encourage food manufacturers to reformulate.

## Outcomes/Results:

The tax has reached its public health goals, as consumption of unhealthy food products has decreased along with decrease in their supply and sale. Manufacturers have changed their product formulas, and improved nutritional habits were seen beyond the direct effect of the price increase.

Effects were found to be maintained in the second impact assessment.

The tax has also generated alternative funds for public health aims.

A fiscal instrument can effectively improve nutrition literacy/nutritional behaviour, contributing to healthier food choices and also creating revenues for health spending.