

Excise duty on alcohol and alcoholic beverages – evaluation of excise duty rates and tax structures

EU public consultation: open for feedback

https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/13249-Excise-duty-on-alcohol-and-alcoholic-beverages-evaluation-of-excise-duty-rates-and-tax-structures_en

deadline : 4 July 2022

EHN RESPONSE

The European Heart Network welcomes the opportunity to provide input on the evaluation of the rules governing excise duty on alcohol and alcoholic beverages, which have not been updated since 1992.

Harmful alcohol consumption is responsible for an estimated 50 000 CVD deaths in the EU.

High alcohol consumption increases the risk of CVD by raising blood pressure and blood levels of triglycerides. Consumption of three or more alcoholic drinks per day (10 g of alcohol per drink) is associated with increased CVD risk.

Alcohol taxation is part of the WHO “best buys” (cost-effective interventions) as it contributes to a reduction in alcohol consumption by decreasing affordability of alcohol. Despite the potential benefits of taxation measures, many EU countries do not make use of this public health measure. For example, 15 EU countries do not impose an excise tax on wine.

Imposing an excise tax on all drinks containing alcohol and raising the minimum taxation on alcohol should be considered a top priority for public health action. Given that pricing policies remain the most untapped potential of tax measures to reduce alcohol consumption and correlated harm, it is EHN’s strong recommendation to:

- raise minimum excise duties on all alcoholic beverages to the highest possible level;
- set up a harmonized level of alcohol taxation across Europe for all types of alcoholic beverages.