



Reductions in sugar sales from soft drinks in the UK from 2015 to 2018

In the UK, adults consume more than double the recommended sugar intake level, and children consume close to triple the recommended intake level. Soft drinks are a major source of this sugar consumption in the UK, accounting for as much as 21% of sugar intake in adults and 33% in children.

In an effort to tackle the high levels of sugar consumed through soft drinks, the UK Government devised a three-tiered levy on sugar-sweetened soft drinks. Products that contain more than 8 g sugar per 100 ml are now taxed at 24 pence per litre and products that contain 5–8 g/100 ml are taxed at 18 pence per litre. Products with less than 5 g sugar per 100 ml are not subject to the tax. The levy was announced in March 2016 and was implemented in April 2018.

This study aims to determine how the sugar content of soft drinks and volume sales of soft drinks changed during the period of 2015-2018, a time of action on soft drinks involving both producer & consumer.

Results showed that, between 2015 and 2018, the volume of sugar sold per capita per day from soft drinks declined by 30%. The study also found that the total volume sales of soft drinks which were subject to the SDIL fell by 50%, while volume sales of low-and zero-sugar drinks rose by 40%. Overall, the findings of the study are supportive of the introduction of fiscal policy measures in changing consumer behaviour and encouraging companies to reformulate products.

Bandy, L. K., et al. "Reductions in Sugar Sales from Soft Drinks in the UK from 2015 to 2018." *BMC Medicine*, vol. 18, no. 1, 13 Jan. 2020, p. 20, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/31931800, 10.1186/s12916-019-1477-4.

World Obesity Federation

Suite 406, 107-111 Fleet Street, London EC4A 2AB

T: +44 (0)20 7936 9987 E: enquiries@worldobesity.org

www.worldobesity.org

Registered charity number 1076981. Registered in England and Wales, 3802726. A company limited by guarantee.