



Council of the  
European Union

Brussels, 30 November 2022  
(OR. en)

15465/22

LIMITE

AGRI 680  
CONSUM 315  
DENLEG 91  
FOOD 75  
SAN 636

**NOTE**

---

From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Permanent Representatives Committee/Council

---

Subject: Conference on harmonized front of pack labelling and its impact on sustainable food labelling (Brussels, 10 November 2022) - information from the Presidency

---

Delegations will find in the Annex an information note prepared by the Presidency on the outcome of the Conference on harmonized front of pack labelling and its impact on sustainable food labelling, which took place in Brussels on 10 November 2022. This subject will be dealt with under “any other business” at the meeting of the “Agriculture and Fisheries” Council on 12 December 2022.

**Conference on Harmonized Front of Pack Labelling and its impact on Sustainable Food  
Labelling (Brussels, 10 November 2022)**

*Information from the Presidency*

On 10 November 2022, the Czech Presidency organised a conference on Harmonized Front of Pack Labelling and its impact on Sustainable Food Labelling, with the aim to discuss existing practices and possible future options.

The event was opened by deputy Minister for Agriculture on behalf of the Czech Presidency, followed by eight presentations made by high level speakers representing the European Commission, the European Parliament, Copa-Cogeca, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Italian Institute of Health, and the food and drink industry (of the Czech Republic, UNESDA (European soft drinks industry) and ASAHI Europe and International (beer industry)).

The conference recalled current EU harmonized nutrition labelling rules and the follow up front of pack nutrition labelling rules. At the same time, in particular with regard to planned development of new front-of-pack nutrition labelling, some of the speakers emphasised the potential risks of providing overly simplistic information on food labels. These potential risks could include: any unintended division of foodstuffs into healthy and unhealthy ones, risk of comparing incomparable products, unintended discrimination of basic unprocessed or traditional foodstuffs or on the other hand promotion of highly processed foodstuffs or snacks, possible confusion between animal-origin products and their plant-based alternatives when using certain product names or front-of-pack nutrition labelling schemes.

Some speakers shared their experiences and positions on certain existing front-of-pack nutrition labelling schemes that are currently used at national level (e.g. Nutri-Score, NutrInform Battery). Some stated that the introduction of the Nutri-Score system would help meet the nutrition-related objectives of the European Farm to Fork strategy and while its introduction would provide consumers with simpler information on food but would fail to provide consumers with factual information on healthy nutrition.

The EP representative supported the introduction of a harmonised mandatory front-of-pack nutrition labelling scheme but did not express support for any particular system and said she expected the European Commission to present its legislative proposal early in 2023.

The European Commission explained that the ongoing revision is expected to tackle four main areas such as front-of-pack nutrition labelling/nutrient profiles for restricting claims, indication of origin or provenance, date marking and labelling of alcoholic beverages. The Commission has carried out extensive consultations with citizens, Member States and various stakeholder groups in support of the impact assessment process and is aware of the complexity and intricacy of the issue and its impact on the health of European citizens.

Opinions expressed by some speakers showed that a possible new EU harmonised front of pack nutrition labelling system should be especially science based, objective, simple, understandable and should reflect the food portions consumed. The focus should not be on an individual foodstuff but on the overall diet. Consumers should be educated about the appropriate amount of food intake, its quantity and frequency. Some speakers also highlighted the need to carefully consider the introduction of new requirements that could have a great impact on small and medium farmers and producers. Some of the speakers called for caution when deciding on an EU-wide harmonised scheme warning of the dangers of a one-size-fits-all approach, arguing that one single scheme for regions with significant cultural differences may not be appropriate.