

Does self-regulation work?

The case of television food advertisement to children in Germany

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Improve the AVMSD: What about our kids?
European Parliament



Relevance of the topic

- Childhood obesity has become a huge challenge for European societies over the last decades
- In Germany, 15% of all children are overweight, 6.3% are obese
(Kurth & Schaffrath Rossario 2007)
- Growing prevalence of children's dietary-related diseases (CDC 2015)
- Omnipresent food advertisement especially of energy-dense, nutrient poor (EDNP) food and drink products influences children's food preferences and consumption patterns (McGinnis et al. 2006; Cairns et al. 2009; Harris et al. 2009; Hartmann & Maschkowski 2009; Linn & Novosat 2008)
- Call for policy frameworks to reduce the exposure and impact of marketing activities to children (World Health Organization 2010)

- Initiative in the EU of leading food and beverage companies
(e.g. Burger King, Coca Cola, Danone, ESA, Ferrero, Kraft Foods, Kellogg's, McDonalds, Nestlé, Pepsico)
 - In 2009: 11 food companies
 - In 2014: 21 food companies

- Purpose:
 - Improve food advertising directed to media audiences with a minimum of 35% of children under 12 years (since 2012)
 - No advertising to children on television and company websites of products not fulfilling the common nutritional criteria
 - No marketing actions in primary schools

- Until end of 2012: Company specific criteria
- Since end of 2012: Adoption of harmonized criteria (mandatory by the end of 2014)
 - Specific criteria for nine product categories (e.g. oils, cereal based products)
 - Relevant nutrients (values dependent on product category):
 - Energy, sodium, saturated fat, sugar
 - Positive nutrients
 - Sugar, sugar-based products, soft drinks generally banned



Research objective

Effectiveness of the EU Pledge

- Differences of member and non-member companies of the EU Pledge regarding children's food advertising (CFA) over time
 - Extent of CFA's
 - Nutritional values of advertised products

- Effectiveness of the EU Pledge in reducing children's exposure to television advertisement of EDNP products



Approach

Quantitative content analysis of German television program

- Data sampling in October 2011, October 2012, October 2014
- Weekend day and weekday
- Children's 10 most popular TV networks
 - 2 public networks
 - 2 children's networks
 - 6 commercial networks
- Detailed codebook to analyze television commercials and products' nutritional value
- Evaluation of CFA products compliance with criteria of the EU Pledge



Selected results

Sample characteristics

	2011	2012	2014 ^{a)}
Television sample [h]	296.0	296.0	300.0
Television advertisement			
Duration [h]	43.3	39.6	44.7
No. of broadcasted spots	7,441	6,776	7,733
Food advertisement			
No. of broadcasted spots	1,554	1,522	1,493
Children's food advertisement (CFA)			
No. of broadcasted spots	402	372	295
Share of total commercials [%]	5.4	5.5	3.8
No. of advertised products	26	26	20
Avg. commercial length [sec]	23.9	21.9	19.9

^{a)} Note: Number of total hours recorded in 2014 differ from previous years as Nickelodeon extended broadcasting time to 10 p.m. compared to 8 p.m. in 2011 and 2012

➤ Number and share of broadcasted CFAs as well as average length per CFA declined significantly ($p < 0.001$) over the period 2011 to 2014

CFA: Comparing EU Pledge member and non-member companies



	2011 N = 402		2012 N = 372		2014 N = 295	
	Pledge member	Non-member	Pledge member	Non-member	Pledge member	Non-member
Children's food advertisement						
No. of broadcasted CFA	239	163	203	169	172	123
Share of total commercials [%]	3.2	2.2	3.0	2.5	2.2	1.6
Television network type						
Children's networks [%]	52.7	48.5	44.3	58.0	37.8	48.8
Other networks [%] ^{a)}	47.3	51.5	55.7	42.0	62.2	51.2

^{a)} Note: „Other networks“ summarises the broadcasted CFAs of public and commercial networks

- CFAs share in total commercials declined to a similar extent for Pledge member and non-member companies
- Share of CFAs on children's networks in total CFA's significantly declined for Pledge member but not for non-member companies

Nutritional values of CFAs

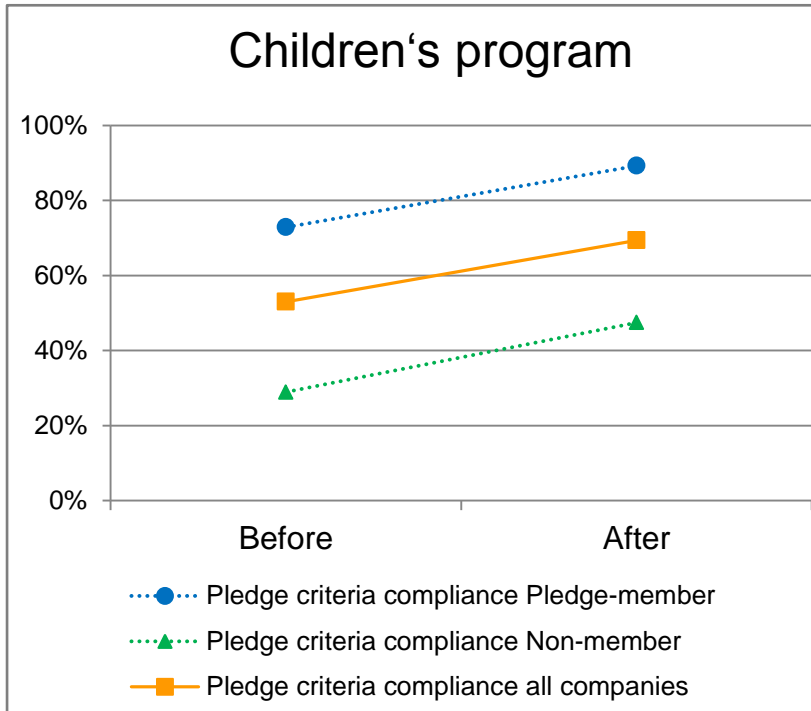


	2011			2012			2014		
	Pledge member	Non-member	p	Pledge member	Non-member	p	Pledge member	Non-member	p
Carbohydrate [g]	43.2	52.2	–	44.7	55.6	–	47.5	45.6	–
Sugar [g]	43.3	38.2	–	34.4	37.7	–	30.2	38.6	–
Protein [g]	7.6	4.0	** a)	9.1	3.8	** a)	8.2	4.6	* a)
Total fat [g]	17.0	10.6	–	23.0	8.7	** b)	25.1	9.7	** b)
Saturated fat [g]	9.4	6.9	–	13.0	4.4	** b)	12.1	6.1	** b)
Sodium [mg]	183.4	115.8	–	197.1	219.2	–	252.0	188.5	–
Energy [kcal]	405.9	322.4	–	425.9	317.6	* a)	454.7	320.2	* a)

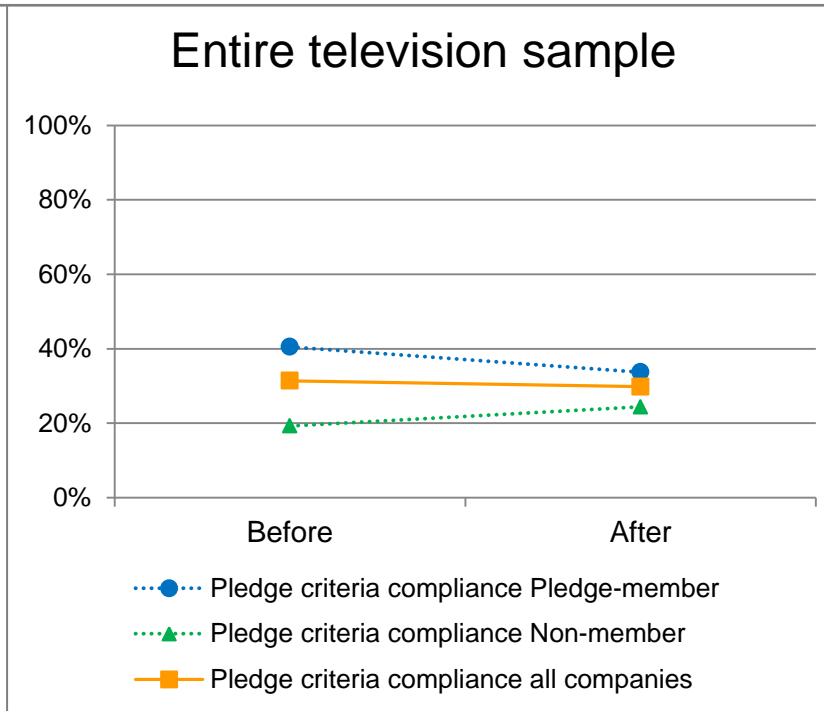
Note: Nutritional value per 100g or 100 ml; ** $p < 0.005$; * $p < 0.1$; a) T-test; b) Mann-Whitney-U-test

- In 2012 and 2014, CFA products from Pledge members are significantly higher in proteins, but also in total fat, saturated fat and energy
- Move from sweetened food categories to salty snacks and fast food

Compliance of CFAs with EU Pledge



Note: Before criteria introduction: $n_{(member)} = 210$ | $n_{(non-member)} = 173$
 After criteria introduction: $n_{(member)} = 65$ | $n_{(non-member)} = 59$



Note: Before criteria introduction: $n_{(member)} = 442$ | $n_{(non-member)} = 332$
 After criteria introduction: $n_{(member)} = 172$ | $n_{(non-member)} = 123$

- *Children's program*: Rise of compliance for member and non-member companies at the same level
- *Entire program*: Compliance rate at a considerable lower level compared to children's program for both member and non-member companies and decline of compliance for member companies



Conclusion

Food advertisement targeting children improves moderately

- Improvement over time:
 - Decline regarding the overall extent of child appealing food advertisement
 - Rise of compliance with Pledge criteria for CFAs of member companies at least during children's program
- Difference in compliance rate between study results and results of EU Pledge Monitoring Report 2014
 - 89.2% vs. 98.5% compliance rate in 2014

Commitments of signatory companies have limited impact

- Marketing of foods through television advertising targeting children declined considerably:
 - Non-members cut broadcasting of CFAs in all networks to a similar extent
 - Pledge member companies reduced broadcasting CFAs primarily in children's networks
- Compliance with the Pledge criteria is possible by shifting CFA for EDNP products from children's networks to other networks
- Limiting the EU Pledge to television program with an audience of minimum 35% children less than 12 years impedes the effectiveness of the scheme

**Thank you very much
for your attention!**

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