

The School Milk Scheme

Civil Dialogue Group

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The School Milk Scheme:

The overarching aim of the School Milk Scheme is to encourage the consumption of agricultural products and **install healthy eating habits in EU children.**



Currently discussed in the European Parliament, the COMAGRI report goes **one important step** further than the European Commission's proposal, by broadening the list of eligible products:

- From plain drinking milk to include **unflavoured fermented milk (yogurt), cheese and curd.**

COMAGRI Amendment to Article 23- paragraph 2

However, the proposed compromise amendment excludes **flavoured fermented milk/yogurts** (those containing fruits, nuts and cocoa) and **flavoured milks** on the basis of arguments that are out of the scope of the School Milk Scheme, such as :

- More costly than unflavoured fermented milk (yogurts)
- Consumption of these products is stable
- The more "industrialised" the products are, the less money will go to farmers



Breaking down the myths and misconceptions surrounding flavoured milk & yogurts

The benefits of consuming flavoured milk and yogurts:

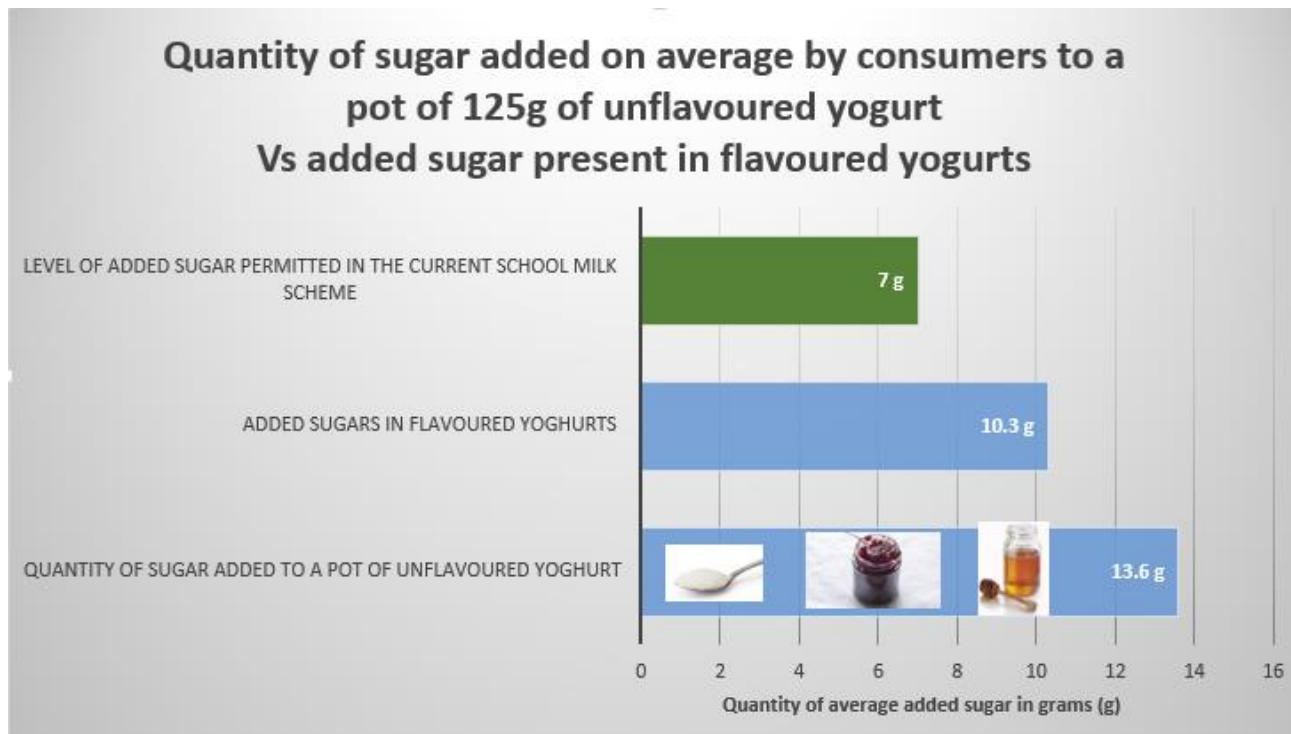
- Flavoured milks and yogurts are a good way to **increase milk consumption** among children to **enhance the nutritional value of their diet**.
- Studies demonstrate that the inclusion of flavoured milk is associated with **higher total milk consumption** and **better overall diet quality without any adverse impact on weight**
- A recent study showed that removal of flavoured milks from schools leads to a **decrease in overall milk intake**, **negatively impacts nutrient intake** and leads to **increase of milk wastage** (failing to completely finish milk portion)
- Many studies have demonstrated **a beneficial impact** of yogurt consumption **on several cardiometabolic outcomes** including a reduced risk of type 2 diabetes, hypertension and stroke and no adverse effects on coronary heart disease



Studies show flavoured yogurt contains LESS sugar than unflavoured yogurt

Research shows that in 30-60% cases a sweetening agent is added to unflavoured yogurt, such as sugar, honey or jam

On average consumers add 13.6 g sugar to their unflavoured yogurt. This is considerably higher compared to the sugar present in flavoured yogurt (10.3g)



Conclusion

The overall objective of the School Milk Scheme is to help delivering a nutritious and balanced diet to EU children and to encourage healthy eating habits.

Although milk is one of the most nutritionally complete products, the EU is experiencing a negative trend of decreasing milk consumption.

As such, it is important to offer a broader category of dairy products to cater to the preference of a wider audience to avoid exacerbating the trend of decreasing milk consumption and prevalent micronutrient deficiencies in children.