

[Press release: Sugar tax revenue helps tackle childhood obesity](#)

The Soft Drinks Industry Levy (SDIL) was introduced in April 2018 and applies to the packaging and importation of soft drinks containing added sugar. It was introduced as part of the government's initiative to tackle childhood obesity by encouraging manufacturers to reduce the sugar content in their drinks products.

The UK has one of the highest obesity rates among developed countries and soft drinks are still the biggest source of sugar in children's diets. Revenue collected from the levy will help fund physical education activities in primary schools, the Healthy Pupils Capital Fund and provide a funding boost for breakfast clubs in over 1,700 schools.

Manufacturers had two years to prepare ahead of the introduction of SDIL. While many manufacturers reduced the sugar content in their drinks products, over 450 traders have registered to pay the levy. There are two rates of tax, depending on the sugar content:

- the 'standard rate' (18p per litre) applies to drinks with sugar content between 5 grams and up to (but not including) 8 grams per 100ml
- the 'higher rate' (24p per litre) applies to drinks with sugar content equal to or greater than 8 grams per 100ml

The Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury, Robert Jenrick, said:

Today's figures show the positive impact the soft drinks levy is having by raising millions of pounds for sports facilities and healthier eating in schools, as well as encouraging manufacturers to cut sugar in over half the drinks found in UK stores.

Helping our next generation to have a healthy and active childhood is a priority for us, and I'm pleased to see the industry is playing its part.

Further findings from HMRC's statistics show:

- since April, over 90% of net liabilities declared by traders were at the higher rate (24p per litre)
- since SDIL was introduced, 85% of gross liabilities were declared as packaged (produced in the UK)

Further information

Read the [Soft Drinks Industry Levy statistics](#).

The statistics are broken down by rate of tax (standard and higher), and the

origin of goods (imported and packaged). Imported refers to liabilities declared as imported from large overseas producers, and packaged refers to liabilities declared as packaged by traders for themselves and on behalf of large producers.

The 2016 Budget announced funding for a number of programmes linked to the revenue from the Soft Drinks Industry Levy. The funding has been allocated to a number of programmes to support pupil health and well-being which include:

- doubling funding for the primary physical education and Sport Premium to £320 million a year from 2017 – the Department for Education and the Department of Health and Social Care contribute £100 million and £60 million per year to the premium respectively, with the Soft Drinks Levy funding contributing £415 million over the remainder of the current spending review period
- providing £100 million in 2018/19 for the Healthy Pupils Capital Fund

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Soft drinks manufacturers and traders have paid an extra £153.8 million in tax since April, statistics published by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) reveal.

[News story: Ministry of Defence Police Officer and Police Dog compete in International Canine Biathlon](#)

Constable Martin Johnson and Police Dog Peppa, from the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) at Burghfield, successfully competed in the annual International Canine Biathlon that recently took place at Rutland Barracks and was hosted by the 1st Military Working Dog Regiment for the first time since 1986.

Military and police competitors from the UK, US, Belgium and Latvia took part in the event, with the biathlon course designed to prepare dogs and their handlers for the problems they could face whilst on duty or when involved in operations.

Police Dog Peppa. Photo: MOD Crown copyright. All rights reserved

A total of 46 teams and individuals took on challenges across a 10km route. This involved a variety of obstacles and activities including: two skips filled with water, a dog carry for 100 metres, agility tests and an electronic shooting range.

Constable Johnson said:

When preparing for the biathlon, training was key. I had to ensure that mine and my police dog's fitness was up to scratch. I prepared for the event in my own time, using equipment such as wheelbarrows and push bikes. This proved to be a real bonding experience for Peppa and I, improving our understanding of one another and making us an even stronger and more confident dog team.

Jumping high over the hurdles. MOD Crown copyright. All rights reserved

Constable Johnson continued:

Peppa and I achieved a respectable 25th place out of the 40 competitors. I was really pleased with this and was astounded by exactly how fit my dog is! She was ready to go and do more training and running around straight after competing!

Next year's event is due to take place in the United States.

[News story: Overwhelming public support for sugar and calorie reduction](#)

A new survey from Public Health England (PHE) shows overwhelming public support for reducing sugar and calories in everyday foods.

The survey, carried out by Ipsos MORI, found around 9 in 10 people support the government working with the food industry (manufacturers, supermarkets and the eating out of home sector) to make everyday foods and drinks healthier. Helping the NHS was named as one of the main reasons for people supporting this work.

This applied to all sectors, and no concessions were made for food consumed in restaurants, coffee shops or cafes, despite this often being labelled as a

'treat'.

These figures come as Duncan Selbie, chief executive of Public Health England, tells the food industry that next year PHE will highlight where progress has not been made on sugar reduction and that this may result in further action from the government.

Speaking at today's, Tuesday 20 November 2018, [Food Matters Live](#) event in London, he will call on every sector of the food industry, in particular out of home outlets, to step up and accelerate its efforts.

The survey explored the public's perception of obesity, and PHE's reduction programmes that have challenged the food industry to reduce sugar and calories by 20% in everyday foods such as breakfast cereals, yoghurts and pizzas, as well as ready meals.

Other notable findings from the survey include:

- over 9 in 10 respondents think obesity is a problem in the UK, and 79% believe it has a negative impact on the NHS
- only cancer (47% of respondents) and mental health (43%) are seen as bigger health concerns for the UK population than obesity (39%)
- people believe the greatest responsibility for tackling obesity lies with individuals and families (90%), the food industry (80%) and the government (72%), underlining a belief in a collective responsibility
- there was support from 87% of people to replace unhealthy products near supermarket tills and checkouts, with healthier ones

Duncan Selbie, chief executive at PHE, said:

Obesity is the pandemic of modern times. Customers are saying they want faster progress from the food industry, and in particular, those businesses that have taken little or no action. We will be publicly reporting on these during 2019.

Dr Alison Tedstone, chief nutritionist at PHE, said:

Severe obesity in ten-to-eleven year-olds is at an all-time high. Plans to improve the nation's diet are often described as 'nanny state' interference, but it's clear people want healthier food and they expect the industry to play their full part in this.

The survey also shows people expect the government to tackle obesity, with 60% believing it could do more. However, the survey was undertaken before the government published chapter 2 of its [Childhood Obesity Plan](#).

In May 2018, PHE reported on progress against the first year sugar reduction ambition of 5%. This showed an overall 2% reduction in foods contributing the most sugar to children's diets, with up to 6% reduced in some product categories.

Next year, PHE will publish further progress towards reaching the 20% sugar reduction ambition by 2020, as well as guidelines for industry to achieve the 20% reduction in calories by 2024.

[News story: Blackpool Council joins HM Land Registry's digital Local Land Charges Register](#)

HM Land Registry's digital Local Land Charges Register continues to grow, enabling the digital transformation of homebuying.