European Children's Rights Unit

The European Children's Rights Unit, School of Law and Social Justice, University of Liverpool.

Did You Know...?

- In 2015, a third of UK pupils in years 7-10 admitted to trying alcohol or tobacco.
- Couple this with this research, which shows that 10-15 year olds see 10% more alcohol advertisements on TV than their parents do.
- If the UK were to leave the EU, there would be no rules on preventing the explicit targeting of minors, in alcohol and tobacco advertising. This will have a detrimental effect on children's health and thus lead to an increase in NHS spending.

Brexit would limit access to EU funds for prevention of child obesity and underage alcohol and tobacco consumption.

<u>Check out ECRU's other</u> <u>Brexit Briefing Papers:</u>

- > EU Migrant Children.
- Forced Migrant Children.
- > Child Protection
- > Children's Education.
- Children's Employment.
- > Children's Family Life.
- Children's Leisure and Football.

The Impact of Brexit on Children's Health Protection.





How does the EU address health risks for children and youth?

So far, the EU has made laws to protect children against irresponsible advertising, to control the production and sale of tobacco, and ensure that claims made about food are truthful.

The Audiovisual Media
Services Directive forbids
direct targeting of minors
in commercials for
alcoholic beverages.

The annex to the <u>Tobacco</u> <u>Products Directive</u> includes mandatory health warnings on cigarette packaging such as: "Your smoke harms your children" and "Smokers' children are more likely to start smoking". It is unlikely that a UK directive equivalent would prioritize children as being vulnerable to tobacco abuse.

Council Recommendation on the prevention of smoking 2003/54 recommends that EU Member States "adopt appropriate legislative and/or administrative measures... to present tobacco sales to children and adolescents." It also suggests protection from exposure to tobacco smoke especially in educational establishments and places providing services to children.

The European action plan to reduce the harmful use of alcohol 2012 – 2020 is an action plan that the WHO has put forward, working with the EU Member States to reduce the harmful usage of alcohol, based on 10 recommended target areas.

WHO European Childhood
Obesity Surveillance
Initiative (COSI) was a
system set up to monitor
and understand the progress
of obesity within primary
school children in order to
respond with the appropriate
action by member states.

EU Action Plan on Childhood
Obesity 2014-2020 is an
action plan that was
proposed by the Member
States to develop policy on
tackling childhood obesity.
This was done as a result of
EU Health Ministers declaring
their commitment after a
broad consensus that
overweight and obesity in
children and young people
should be prioritised in
health agendas.

Under the 'Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived', £4.27 million of the UK's funding allocation has gone to supporting breakfast clubs and programmes in order to tackle poverty and child malnutrition.

What will happen if the UK stays in the EU?

EU law creates an obligation for Member States to focus and amend their domestic laws to accommodate children's rights. With the UK staying a member of the EU, it will have direct access to funding under EU initiatives to help pull children and families provide better children's health and wellbeing. The Directives in place to target specific issues of alcohol use and obesity, there is a focus on improving lifestyles and upholding the rights of young people.

And if the UK leaves the EU?

Members of the EU are responsible for protecting children from risks specific to their own countries. However, they cannot easily protect children from risks that are universal. For example, Member States are not able to prevent a multinational company from irresponsibility advertising products that are harmful to children – a company can promise to play by less strict rules in one country, so that it can advertise to children to other countries, in accordance with those rules.