

**Question for written answer E-000188/2016
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Frédérique Ries (ALDE)

Subject: Reducing VAT on fruit and vegetables at EU level and encouraging people to eat a balanced diet

Some 400 000 new cases of obesity are registered every year. In recent months, a series of initiatives, often in the form of a tax on fatty foods and/or sugary drinks, have been launched in the Member States in an effort to combat the disease, particularly amongst children. Two recent studies, one British and one Mexican, have shown that taxing sugary drinks more heavily and reducing their sugar content can help people to reduce their calorie intake by 16 to 39 calories per day. Unfortunately, this is merely a drop in the calorie ocean.

In December 2006, meanwhile, as rapporteur on the Green Paper entitled 'Promoting Healthy Diets and Physical Activity', I proposed the introduction of an incentive-based policy, which would use price cuts, tax reductions and other subsidies to encourage people to buy healthy foods, such as fruit and vegetables.

1. Ten years and no real results later, is the Commission willing to draw on my proposal and launch a comprehensive initiative to combat obesity and promote healthy eating?
2. Does the Commission think it feasible to introduce an EU-wide zero rate for fruit and vegetables, so as to ensure that all sections of society have access to healthy food?