

Question for written answer E-002646/2022
to the Commission
Rule 138
Mara Bizzotto (ID)

Subject: Junk food flooding social media: the role of influencers

The online paper 'Il Fatto Alimentare' has condemned the widespread advertising of junk food on social media, especially on platforms like TikTok, Instagram and YouTube, by many influencers 'followed' by young people.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) report of 7 February 2022, the categories of food most frequently promoted on social media are fast foods, sweet carbonated drinks, chocolate, sweet and savoury snacks and bakery items.

There is also concern over the clear, continuous and extensive use of persuasive marketing techniques, which still target children and adolescents by a variety of means, including for example marketing products on websites popular with young people.

In addition, there is a lack of any specific regulatory instruments governing influencer marketing. In Italy, the Italian Competition Authority (AGCM) has taken action to prevent these covert forms of advertising.

Twenty pan-European federations launched an appeal on Obesity Day 2022.

In the light of the above, can the Commission state:

1. what steps it will take to redress the role of social media in food marketing in order to shield children and their health from junk food;
2. whether it will take action to promote awareness of the Mediterranean diet among young people as an example of a complete and balanced diet;
3. how it intends to protect consumers from influencer marketing malpractices?