

(English version)

Priority question for written answer P-004940/25
to the Commission
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(15 December 2025)

Subject: Updated opinion of the European Food Safety Authority on the effects of energy drink consumption by minors

The Committee on the Environment, Climate and Food Safety held a public hearing on 3 December 2025 regarding the food safety risks linked to energy drink consumption by minors. During the hearing, paediatric experts, clinicians, nutrition specialists and civil society organisations presented converging evidence of significant and well-documented health risks associated with energy drinks among children and adolescents. These include sleep disturbances, elevated blood pressure, cardiac irregularities, anxiety, behavioural changes, and increased risk-taking, as well as the growing phenomenon of mixing energy drinks with alcohol.

In the light of this, can the Commission indicate whether it will ask the European Food Safety Authority to update its scientific opinion on the health effects of energy drink consumption on minors, including:

1. A reassessment of the risks of caffeine and other stimulants, specifically for children and adolescents?
2. The cumulative effect of energy drinks in combination with sugar, alcohol and other stimulants, as well as the impact of early and repeated exposure to energy drinks on developmental, neurological and behavioural outcomes?
3. The public health consequences of marketing practices for energy drinks that target minors.

Submitted: 15.12.2025

Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(30 January 2026)

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) assessed the safety of caffeine in May 2015. In its Scientific Opinion ⁽¹⁾, EFSA evaluated the potential adverse health effects of caffeine intake from all dietary sources in the general healthy population and in specific sub-groups, including children and adolescents.

The assessment also considered caffeine consumed in combination with other substances commonly present in energy drinks, such as D-glucurono-γ-lactone and taurine.

For children and adolescents, EFSA concluded that the single doses of caffeine considered to be of no concern for adults (3 mg/kg body weight per day) may also be applied to children and adolescents.

Regarding cumulative effects, the safety of energy drinks is primarily determined by their caffeine content. When caffeine intake remains within established safe limits, other typical constituents of energy drinks do not pose adverse health effects, even when consumed in combination with caffeine. EFSA's 2015 Opinion did not assess interactions between energy drinks and alcohol.

Reported adverse effects are more linked to alcohol consumption itself, which is prohibited for minors; similar considerations apply to other stimulants.

The Commission has taken note of emerging evidence and concerns raised at the public hearing on 3 December 2025 and will consider whether an update of EFSA's assessment is warranted.

The potential regulation of marketing practices related to energy drinks falls within the competence of Member States and constitutes risk management rather than risk assessment, which is outside EFSA's remit. Some Member States have already introduced national measures ⁽²⁾, including restrictions on sales to individuals under 18.

⁽¹⁾ EFSA Journal 2015;13(5):4102.

⁽²⁾ In line with Article 36 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.