Seeking sweet spot in cutting sugar intake

Sugary drinks are back in the spotlight as health experts call for measures to curb sugar intake.

Personal choice is all very well, but that choice needs to be based on a realistic understanding of what’s at stake.}

**SUGAR CONTENT IN DRINKS**

![Sugar content in drinks](https://example.com/sugar-content-graph)

**Three experts’ views on four proposals**

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<thead>
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**War on sugar**

The global Food Regulation is similar to the global Tobacco Regulation, and there has been success in reducing sugar consumption. However, there is little evidence of successful interventions. A more effective strategy would be to combine global and national policies.

**A world of sugar: the battle against rising sugar consumption**

Sugar consumption has been on the rise worldwide, with a significant increase in the past decade. This is partly due to the globalization of the food industry and the increased availability of sugary products. The World Health Organization (WHO) has called for a reduction in sugar intake to combat the health problems associated with high sugar consumption. However, this has not been achieved, and sugar consumption continues to rise. A more effective strategy would be to combine global and national policies.

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**Informed public is best weapon against diabetes**

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**What other countries are doing**

**Thailand**

**Consumption plunges after sugar tax imposed**

In a bid to curb obesity in Malaysia, the government has opted for a measure by taxing soft drinks and juices with added sugar. According to Trinna Leong, an Indochina Bureau Chief, the government hopes to do more than tax sugar because drinks are the main source of sugar for Thais... Thais consume about 30kg to 32kg of sugar a year and we hope to see the number drop by 10 per cent this year.

**Malaysia**

**Asia’s fattest nation needs to do more than tax sugar**

Although it was recently reported that the government of Thailand imposed a sugar tax, which has made a small impact on consumer behavior, the ministry hopes that consumers will change their dietary habits. Critics also acknowledge that, Dr Lee is mixed, with some raising doubts about the taxation of sugar, saying that the government needs to have a high natural sugar content in their products.

**Philippines**

**Sales down; savings in healthcare a possibility**

Sales of sugar-sweetened beverages have dropped by nearly 10 per cent in the Philippines since the sugar tax was launched, according to a study. This is after sugar tax imposed on beverages has made a small impact on consumer behavior, the ministry hopes that consumers will change their dietary habits. Critics also acknowledge that, Dr Lee is mixed, with some raising doubts about the taxation of sugar, saying that the government needs to have a high natural sugar content in their products.

**India**

**‘Sin tax’ does nothing to quench thirst for sugary drinks**

India accounts for 43 per cent of the global market of sugar and is the world’s largest producer. Indian research has also found that while the ‘sin tax’ has been imposed, it has not done much to reduce the consumption of sugary drinks. According to a recent study, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has imposed a sugar tax of Rs 40 (30ml) on sugary drinks, the largest in the world. The tax, however, has not been very effective in reducing the consumption of sugary drinks.

**United States**

**Hits, misses and fightback by businesses**

The US has a complex relationship with sugar. While the government has been pushing for lower sugar consumption, businesses have been pushing back. The tax on high-fructose corn syrup, for example, has been met with resistance from the food industry, which argues that it will raise costs and hurt businesses.

**Britain**

**Consumers not sold on obesity-risk message**

The government’s sugar tax has been unpopular with many in the UK, with some calling it a “sin tax”. However, a recent study has shown that the tax has not had the desired effect on consumer behavior. The government has been under pressure to increase the tax, but has so far resisted.

**Other parts of Europe**

- **France**
  - A soda tax on sugary drinks has been imposed in France, with the goal of reducing consumption of sugary drinks and improving public health. The tax has been met with some criticism, with some businesses arguing that it will hurt their profits.
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