

## PRESS RELEASE

### Voluntary industry action changes food advertising to children

**Brussels, September 9<sup>th</sup> 2009:** the food industry has significantly changed the types of products it advertises to children across the EU, according to data just released by Accenture Media Services. The figures, to be presented to the European Commission on Friday, show the extent to which companies have voluntarily restricted the foods they advertise to under 12s altogether or only to "better for you" options.

These results form the first monitoring report of the EU pledge ([www.eu-pledge.eu](http://www.eu-pledge.eu)), a commitment taken by 11 food manufacturers<sup>1</sup> in December 2007 to change the products they advertise to children under 12 years. Representing approximately two thirds of the food advertising market in the EU, the company commitments apply to all advertising on TV, print and the Internet and came into force as of January 2009. As a public commitment to the European Commission's Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, the initiative is subject to independent monitoring.

Monitoring was conducted by Accenture Media Services in France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Poland and Spain, although the commitment applies all 27 EU member states. The overall results show:

- **A 93% decline in advertising for products that do not meet companies' nutritional criteria in programmes with an audience composed of a majority of children.**
- **A 56% decline in advertising for these products overall, i.e. in all programmes on all channels at all times.**

For all EU Pledge member companies' advertising across all products (i.e. no distinction on a nutritional basis) this represents:

- **A 61% decline in programmes with an audience composed of a majority of children.**
- **A 30% decline overall, i.e. in all programmes on all channels at all times.**

In addition, signatory companies committed not to engage in any commercial communications related to food and beverage products in primary schools, except where specifically requested by or agreed with the school administration for educational purposes. Independent monitoring by Price Waterhouse Coopers showed that food advertisers were 93% compliant with their commitment.

Said Stephan Loerke, WFA Managing Director: *"Industry has long held that voluntary action can be more effective in a shorter timeframe than government regulation. These independent data show how self-regulation can help deliver on public policy objectives and why it cannot be discounted from the policy mix".*

The EU Pledge was facilitated and endorsed by the World Federation of Advertisers and is a joint industry commitment to the EU Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, chaired by the EU Director General for Health and Consumer Protection, Robert Madelin.

The full EU Pledge Monitoring Report can be downloaded at [www.eu-pledge.eu](http://www.eu-pledge.eu)

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<sup>1</sup> Burger King, Coca-Cola, Danone, Ferrero, General Mills, Kellogg's, Kraft Foods, Mars, PepsiCo, Nestle, Unilever



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**Note for editors:**

The World Federation of Advertisers (WFA) is the voice of advertisers worldwide representing 90% of global marketing communications expenditures, roughly US\$700 billion per annum, through a unique, global network: 57 national advertiser associations on five continents as well as over 50 of the world's top 100 advertisers. Through the network, WFA represents more than 10,000 businesses operating in a broad spectrum of sectors at national, regional and global levels.

WFA has a dual mission: to champion responsible commercial communications and to facilitate a media environment which stimulates maximum effectiveness of ad spend. More information at [www.wfanet.org](http://www.wfanet.org)