

# Companies' commitments and practices on population nutrition and environmental sustainability in Belgium 2023/2024

Sector summary: Packaged food and non-alcoholic beverage manufacturers

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## BACKGROUND

### Dietary health and environmental challenges in Belgium

Obesity and diet-related chronic diseases, such as cancers, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and strokes, are significant public health challenges in Belgium. These health issues lead to substantial economic costs, affecting both the healthcare system and national productivity. A key contributor to these health issues is unhealthy food environments.

Additionally, the food system in Belgium accounts for about 20% of the country's total greenhouse gas emissions, with agricultural production alone contributing 10%. To address these challenges, coordinated efforts from the government, food industry, and society are essential in creating healthier and more sustainable food environments.

This study assessed company commitments and practices related to obesity and population level nutrition (BIA-Obesity) and environmental sustainability (BIA-Sustainability) in Belgium in 2023/2024. This summary highlights the results for the sector of packaged food and non-alcoholic beverage manufacturers.





# METHODOLOGY

The Business Impact Assessment tool (BIA) evaluates voluntary companies' commitments using various indicators divided into six distinct domains for BIA-Obesity and across ten domains for BIA-sustainability . Each commitment is analysed for its transparency, comprehensiveness, and specificity, and scored according to international criteria. For BIA-Obesity, the scores from all domains are aggregated and weighted to generate a final score out of 100 for each company according to their sectors. For BIA-Sustainability, no weightings are used for the different domains and the scores are presented by domain. Where available, practices are assessed using available data (i.e. Nutrtrack to assess nutritional quality of company's products portfolio).

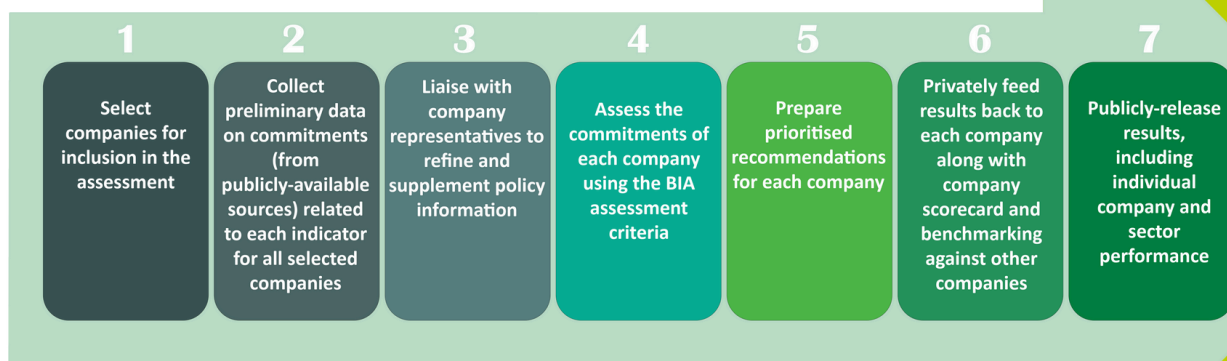
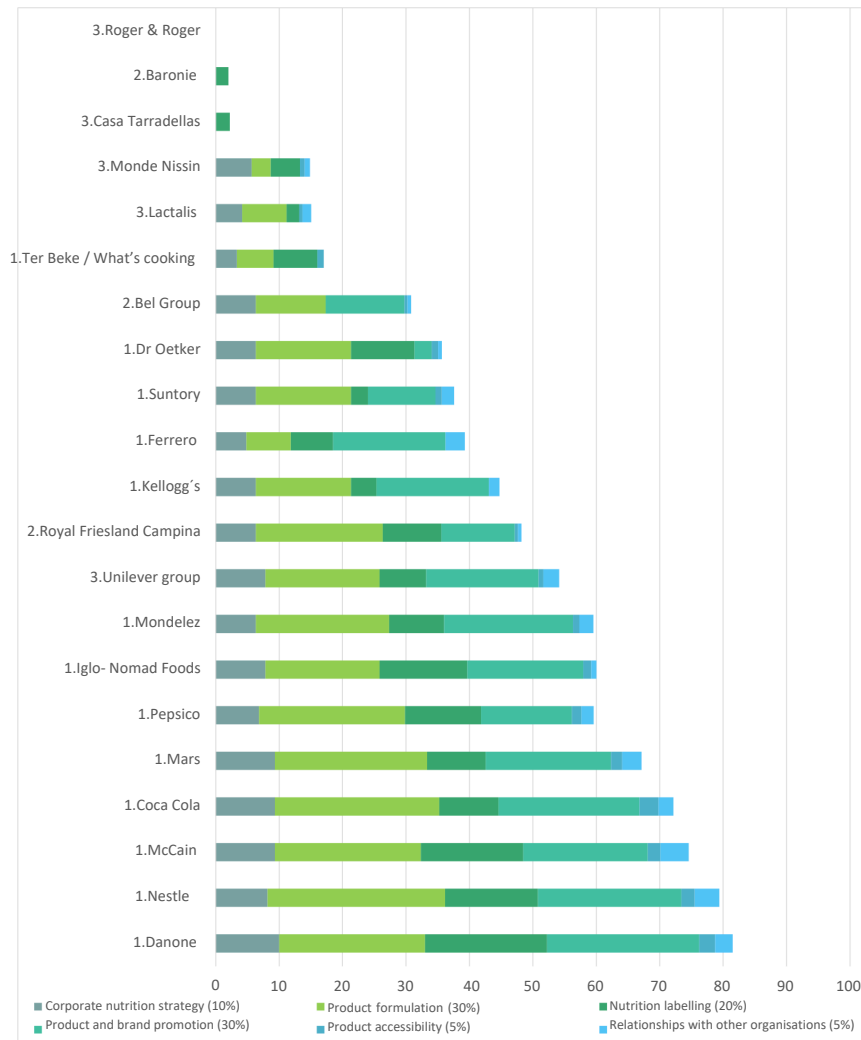


Figure 1. The process for Business Impact Assessment research process



## BIA-OBESITY OVERALL RESULT FOR PACKAGED FOOD AND NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE MANUFACTURERS 2023/2024



**Figure 2. The overall BIA-Obesity results for Packaged food and non-alcoholic beverage manufacturers in Belgium (Group 1: Full engagement with the process; Group 2: Accepted participation, but contributions not received in time; Group 3: Due to Lack of contact, the assessment of commitments was based on publicly available information only)**

## Commitments

The median overall score for packaged food and non-alcoholic beverage manufacturers was 45%, close to the overall median of 40% for all sectors assessed. Danone was the top performer with 82%, while Roger & Roger scored 0% across all domains, highlighting a complete lack of commitments. 13 out of 21 companies fully participated in the process.



# KEY FINDINGS

## Commitments

**01**

**Corporate Nutrition Strategy:** The median score was 63%, with Danone achieving the highest score of 100%, indicating strong strategic commitments, while Roger & Roger scored 0%.

**03**

**Nutrition Labelling:** The median score was 37%, with Danone scoring the highest at 96% and multiple companies like Roger & Roger scoring 0%.

**05**

**Product Accessibility:** The median score was 20%, with Coca Cola scoring the highest at 60%, and Kellogg's, Ferrero, Casa Tarradellas, Baronie and Roger & Roger scored 0%.

**02**

**Product Formulation:** The median score was 50%, with Nestle leading at 93% and Roger & Roger scoring 0%.

**04**

**Product and Brand Promotion:** The median score was 48%, with Danone leading at 80%, while many companies, including Baronie, Lactalis, Monde Nissin, Casa Tarradellas and Roger & Roger had no commitments, scoring 0%.

**06**

**Relationships with Other Organizations:** The median score was 33 %, with McCain achieving the highest at 89%, while most of other companies showed no or little engagement or disclosures, scoring lower than 15%.



# KEY FINDINGS

## Performances

The assessment of packaged food and non-alcoholic beverage manufacturers across nutrition metrics shows variability in performance.

01.

### Nutri-Score

**Iglo** leads with the highest proportion of Nutri-Score A products (**64%**), demonstrating a strong commitment to healthier product offerings. Conversely, **Baronie** has the highest proportion of Nutri-Score E products at **85%**, followed by **Ferrero** with **76%**. **Baronie**, **Ferrero**, **Suntory** and **Roger & Roger** have no Nutri-Score A products.

02.

### Ultra-Processed Foods

**Kellogg's**, **Ferrero**, **Roger and Roger** and **Ter Beke** have the highest proportion of ultra-processed foods (~**100%**). **Lactalis**, on the other hand, has the lowest proportion of ultra-processed foods (**6.5%**).

03.

### Marketing to Children

**Ter Beke** has the lowest percentage of products not permitted for marketing to children at **5%**, while **Baronie**, **Ferrero** and **Roger & Roger** have **100%** of their products restricted from child marketing, showing a significant gap in promoting child-friendly products.

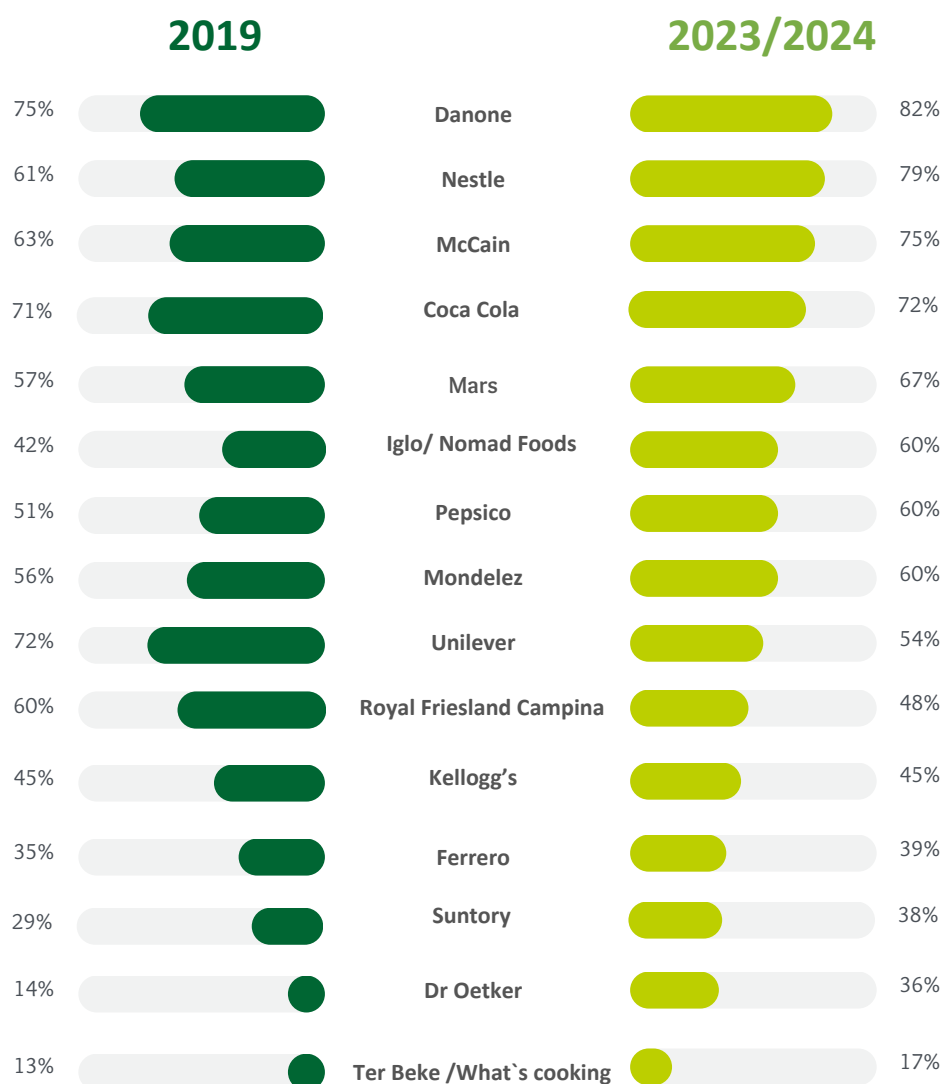
04.

### Commitments vs. Performance

The analysis reveals discrepancies between BIA-Obesity commitments and actual performance. While companies like **Iglo** and **Danone** have high commitments and perform well in having healthier product portfolios, **Ferrero** has a high percentage of Nutri-Score D & E products (**93%**) despite some commitments (**23%**) in product reformulation. **Baronie** and **Roger & Roger** show minimal commitments and poor performance, with a full portfolio unsuitable for child marketing.



## COMPARISON OF BIA-OBESITY OVERALL RESULTS BETWEEN 2019 AND 2023/2024



**Figure 3. The comparison of commitments' overall score between BIA-Obesity 2023 with BIA-Obesity 2019 for packaged food and non-alcoholic beverage manufacturers.**

Most packaged food and non-alcoholic beverage manufacturers improved their BIA-Obesity scores from 2019 to 2023. Companies like Unilever and Friesland Campina saw lower scores in 2023/2024, likely due to a lack of engagement with the process. Danone and McCain showed significant progress, while others like PepsiCo and Kellogg's kept similar scores. Nutri-Score analysis revealed reduced Nutri-Score E products across all companies, but only a few, such as Danone and Friesland Campina, had some increase in the percentage of their Nutri-Score A products. In marketing compliance, McCain and Iglo improved their products permitted for marketing to children, while Ferrero and Friesland Campina made little progress. Overall, efforts to meet health and nutrition standards vary widely across the industry.





## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BIA-OBESITY

### Corporate Nutrition Strategy

1. Set SMART nutrition goals, link KPIs of senior managers to targets, and report progress regularly.

### Product Labelling

3. Support EU-wide Nutri-Score use and ensure health claims are only on healthy products.

### Product Accessibility

5. Support sugar taxes, commit to more healthy products, and address affordability of healthier options.

### Product Formulation

2. Commit to reducing sodium, sugar, and unhealthy fats using Nutri-Score for reformulation.

### Product Promotion

4. Implement policies restricting child-targeted marketing and remove appealing techniques for unhealthy products.

### External Relationships

6. Publish research funding and disclose or refrain from political donations.



## BIA-SUSTAINABILITY OVERALL RESULT FOR PACKAGED FOOD AND NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE MANUFACTURERS 2023

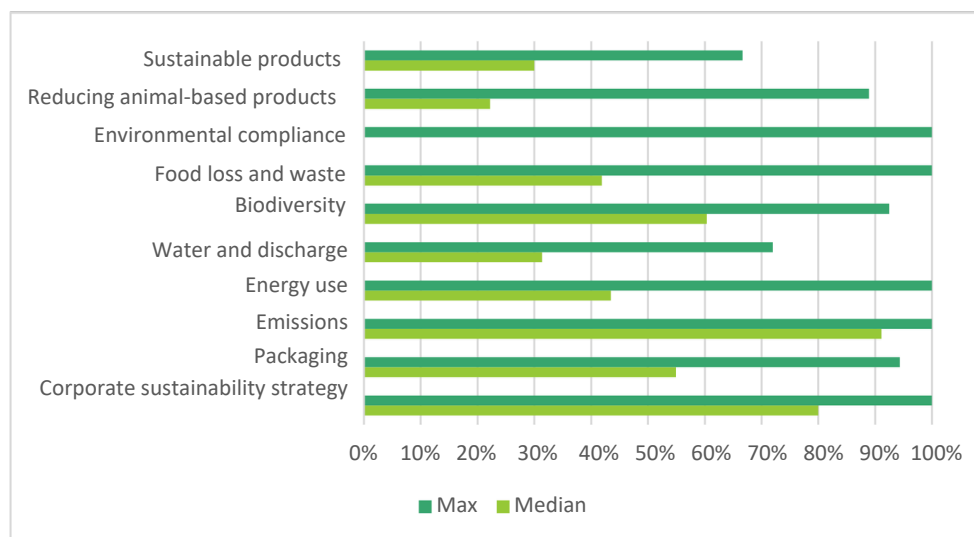


Figure 4. The overall results of BIA-sustainability for Packaged food and non-alcoholic beverage manufacturers

The sustainability assessment for packaged food and non-alcoholic beverage manufacturers sector highlights strong performance in key areas, with the Emissions domain leading at 91%, reflecting robust efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Corporate Sustainability Strategy follows closely at 80%, showcasing significant integration of sustainability into business practices. Biodiversity also scores well at 60%, indicating progress in promoting ecological diversity.

However, gaps remain in several domains. Packaging achieves a moderate score of 55%, while Energy Use and Food Loss and Waste score 43% and 42%, respectively, pointing to the need for stronger action. Water and Discharge Management and Sustainable Products, scoring 31% and 30%, highlight further opportunities for improvement.

The most critical areas are Reducing Animal-Based Products at 22% and Environmental Compliance at 0%, indicating significant shortcomings. These results emphasize the need for targeted strategies to address these gaps while building on strong performances in emissions reduction and biodiversity efforts.





## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BIA-SUSTAINABILITY

### 1. Corporate Sustainability Strategy

Establish clear, time-bound goals across sectors, ensure comprehensive implementation, and regularly report progress.

### 2. Packaging

Set ambitious targets for recyclable and renewable materials, adopt biodegradable alternatives, and implement innovative solutions to minimize waste.

### 3. Emissions

Commit to measurable GHG reduction targets, addressing direct and supply chain emissions, with third-party benchmarking for transparency.

### 4. Energy Use

Improve energy efficiency through clean technology investments and infrastructure to lower carbon footprints.

### 5. Water and Discharge

Strengthen water conservation and quality goals, focusing on intensive production processes.

### 6. Biodiversity

Develop plans to mitigate ecosystem impact, implement sustainable sourcing, and reduce deforestation risks.

### 7. Food Loss and Waste

Align initiatives with international protocols, ensure supply chain practices minimize waste, and report progress publicly.

### 8. Environmental Compliance

Increase transparency by disclosing compliance with regulations and addressing non-compliance issues.

### 9. Reducing Animal-Based Products

Expand plant-based and sustainable protein options to support eco-friendly diets.

### 10. Sustainable Products

Increase availability and sales of certified sustainable goods, emphasizing fair trade, organic, and local products with responsible sourcing.