Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

The SFP vision is a world free from the death and suffering caused by tobacco consumption.

Mission

The Partnership’s mission is the effective implementation of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). To this end, the SFP works with decision makers to ensure that tobacco control receives adequate political attention at EU level, to promote tobacco-control information and policy research at EU and national levels, in collaboration with other EU health organisations and tobacco-control networks. It also aims to ensure FCTC implementation globally, and is working to release EU funding for tobacco control, to counter poverty in developing countries.

Our advocacy work reflects our values

- **It is based on the Framework Convention for Tobacco Control;** we recognise that the tobacco pandemic is nurtured by a global industry which transcends national and regional boundaries and requires a coordinated response with other regions

- **It is based on partnerships;** we recognise the need to work with others to achieve our aims and draw on a wide range of views and expertise to achieve our objectives

- **is evidence based;** our work and policy positions are independent and based on our critical review of published, peer-reviewed evidence, and feedback from experts and partner organisations

- **It is based on efficiency and effectiveness;** we deliver agreed objectives and outputs and continually, seek to improve on processes and to make best use of resources

- **It is flexible and innovative;** we work both proactively to shape the agendas of the European Institutions as well as reactively to respond to needs and priorities at European level, taking into account what is happening at the global level

The Annual Review gives an overview of advocacy work undertaken by the Smokefree Partnership (SFP) during the year. If you have a special interest in any of the articles or would like to read SFP reports, letters or submissions to the European Institutions or political analysis on tobacco-related issues, these are available on our website at www.smokefreepartnership.eu
Highlights of the Year

- Launch of the Spotlight on the FCTC briefings. The aim of the Spotlight briefings is to provide an overview of the WHO FCTC obligations and what these mean to Parties to the Treaty, as well as to inform discussions on key issues such as smoke free policies or taxation. Four briefings were produced and widely distributed to key policy-makers at European and national level, as well as to other relevant stakeholders and the media.

- On January 30, a cocktail reception took place in the European Parliament, Brussels for the launch of the first "Spotlight on the FCTC" briefing. The event was hosted by Linda McAvan MEP and was also be attended by many key MEPs, Commission officials and national attaches.

- On July 15, the Smokefree Partnership organised a seminar in the European Parliament (Brussels) on the role of article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC in protecting public policy from tobacco industry influence. The event was hosted by Avril Doyle MEP and Commissioner Vassiliou was one of the many speakers present during the event. The seminar brought together more than 70 participants including Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), senior officials from the European Commission (EC), Member State representatives, the WHO as well as public health and tobacco experts.

- On 3rd and 4th September, a two-day seminar took place in Leuven on taxation and illicit trade of tobacco products. The overall aim was to present the new proposal of the EC, to provide participants with information on smuggling and illicit trade and to ensure that health considerations are properly taken into consideration during the negotiations.

- The SFP also continued and strengthened its work on the FCTC. Throughout the year, the SFP briefed key EU policy makers on the need for strong guidelines on Article 5.3 (protection of public health policy with respect to tobacco control from the commercial and other vested interests of the tobacco industry), Article 11 (packaging and labelling) and Article 13 (advertising, promotion and sponsorship);

- The SFP revamped its website in order to provide reliable, comparable and easy to use data to EU policy makers. New sections include facts and figures on mortality and cost of smoking related diseases to governments. An interactive map on current smokefree legislation is available and is proving extremely popular.

"The SFP provides a critically important role by giving the tobacco control community a strong and active presence in Europe – We congratulate the SFP on its excellent work, particularly given very limited resources."

Professor John Britton and Professor Ann McNeil,
UK Centre for Tobacco Control Studies, A UKCRC Public Health Research Centre of Excellence
Director’s Statement

2008 was a successful year and our information and advocacy activities went from strength to strength. In the three years since it was set up, the Smoke Free Partnership has become firmly established as the key authority on tobacco control policy at European level:

In 2008 the European Heart Network (EHN) formally joined the Partnership of the European Respiratory Society (ERS), Cancer Research UK (CR-UK) and the Institut National du Cancer (INCa). This strengthened the Partnership and I am grateful for the commitment of all the Partners.

2008 also saw a change in the political environment at European level; Mrs. Androulla Vassiliou became the new Health Commissioner and set a new tone for the regulation of tobacco promotion and consumption in Europe. Speaking at a seminar organized by the SFP on July 15, we were happy to hear Mrs. Vassiliou giving a crushing blow to the tobacco industry, declaring that she will shut the door on anyone wishing to meet with her to promote its interests. During the event, Mrs. Vassiliou also affirmed the European Commission’s key role in the implementation of the FCTC.

There were also great advances in the area of taxation and illicit trade. At international level, Parties to the FCTC started working towards developing a Protocol on illicit trade and met twice in Geneva. Against this background the SFP, along with its partners and the Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL), held a successful two-day seminar. The outcome paved the way for an advocacy tool kit and highlighted the need for further capacity building at national level.

Work on the FCTC was continued and strengthened. Throughout the year, the SFP briefed key EU policy makers on the need for strong guidelines; and both Margarida Silva and myself attended the third COP of the FCTC which took place in Durban in November 2008. During the conference, guidelines on three critical Articles of the FCTC – 5.3, 11 and 13 were adopted.

The SFP is particularly proud to have played an important role regarding the development of the Article 5.3 guidelines during the 2008 negotiations, both at European and at international level, and very pleased that the first principle states that the tobacco industry has a fundamental conflict of interest with the aims and objectives of public health and tobacco control.

2009 will also be a year of change in Europe’s institutional landscape: the European elections in June will result in a new European Parliament, and a new European Commission will start work in November (the second Irish referendum on Lisbon permitting). While the EU has made efforts in introducing and implementing tobacco control policies, the 2009 reshuffling of the European institutions could easily lead to a slow down of progress made in recent years and to a loss of key alliances with decision-makers. In terms of policy, we fully intend to turn this challenge into an opportunity.

With the current financial crisis, the SFP is aware that the funding environment is changing and that we will need to diversify our funding sources and plan for the long-term. But, with the much-welcomed encouragement from our Partners, and the many EU policy makers we worked with this year, we look forward to moving into 2009 confidently and ever closer to the denormalisation of tobacco.

Finally, the SFP would like to thank its partners, as well as all experts, MEPs, Commission officials, Commissioners and colleagues that have supported and contributed to the SFP work and successes over the years.

We look forward to working with you further in the coming year.

Florence Berteletti Kemp
Director, Smoke Free Partnership
Overview of Activities in 2008

Spotlight on the FCTC

In 2008 the SFP launched a series of briefing papers on the FCTC and the EU’s associated obligations.

The first briefing paper “Spotlight on the FCTC” was launched on January 30 2008 at a cocktail reception in the European Parliament (EP) in Brussels. The event was hosted by Linda McAvan MEP and was also attended by key MEPS, Commission officials and national attaches. The first issue of the Spotlight is available in 16 EU official languages and provides readers with an overview of the Treaty's aims and obligations.

The Second issue of the Spotlight was published in April 2008 and focused on Article 8 of the FCTC – protection from exposure to tobacco smoke. This issue provides an overview of the smokefree legislation in EU Member States (MS), and it reveals how only nine of the 25 MS that have signed and ratified the WHO treaty have so far introduced largely comprehensive smokefree legislation. *This issue was translated into 7 EU official languages.*

In July 2008 the SFP launched the third edition of the Spotlight at a public hearing organised in the European Parliament (Brussels) to inform policymakers of recent tobacco industry interference across the world and to generate a debate. Commissioner Vassiliou participated in this meeting. This issue of the Spotlight was also translated into French.

The last issue of the Spotlight published in January 2009 focused on taxation with the aim of informing ongoing discussions on taxation policy issues. This issue was translated into *seven EU official languages.*

The ‘Spotlight on the FCTC’ briefings successfully contributed to on-going policy discussions and policy change. Because they have been effective and well received, the SFP will continue to produce the Spotlights on the FCTC in 2009.

“The public health community needs reliable - and challenging - partners. In the fight against smoking, SFP brings crucial independence, courage and clarity. I have especially admired the accessibility of its publications and workshops on current policy issues such as ETS and taxation.”

Robert Madelin, Director-General for Health and Consumer Protection
Exposure of the Tobacco Industry

Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC aims to ensure that tobacco control policies can be put into practice without interference from an industry whose primary goal is to keep people smoking.

One member of staff was appointed by the Framework Convention Alliance (FCA) to be the NGO observer in the Parties’ working group convened to prepare a set of draft guidelines on Article 5.3. The SFP attended the meetings and liaised with the key facilitator and parties participating in the working group, to ensure that the draft guidelines included key provisions and recognised that the tobacco industry has a fundamental conflict of interest with the aims and objectives of public health and tobacco control.

On July 15, the SFP organised a seminar in the EP in Brussels on the role of Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC in protecting public policy from tobacco industry influence. The overall aim of the meeting was to inform policy makers, in particular EU MS and MEPs of recent tobacco industry interference across the world and to generate a debate. The third edition of the ‘Spotlight on the FCTC’, which looks at the reasoning behind Article 5.3 was launched on this occasion.

The seminar brought together more than 70 participants including MEPs, senior officials from the EC and MS representatives, and public health and tobacco experts.

Present on the panel were EU Health Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou; Avril Doyle MEP; Akinbode Oluwafemi, Environmental Rights Action’s Manager in Lagos, Nigeria; Dr Anna Gilmore, Clinical Reader in Public Health, University of Bath; Ms Jean King, Director of Tobacco Control at Cancer Research UK and Dr Francois Decaillet Senior Advisor and representative to the EU of WHO Regional Office for Europe. The seminar was hosted by Mrs Avril Doyle, MEP.

“Over 1 million people die from Tobacco in the European region each year and the Smoke Free Partnership (SFP) is an essential component in the fight against this epidemic, which is perpetrated by a particularly persistent industry. The SFP provides a high quality, science-based, non-partisan resource to MEPs - such as myself - who are keen to continually raise awareness of the disastrous effects of smoking and the necessary and urgent actions that need to be taken to prevent tobacco related death, disease and disability.”

Avril Doyle,
MEP – Member of the European Parliament
Environment, Food Safety and Public Health Committee
Smokefree Legislation

In 2008 the SFP continued to monitor developments on smokefree policies across Europe. The SFP participated in and contributed to a DG Sanco stakeholder consultation and work on smokefree environments and impact assessment; and worked with MEPs and national permanent representatives to inform discussions on smokefree initiatives and regulations.

A review of smokefree policies in Europe, including new laws and the scientific evidence pre- and post-legislation, was carried out by the SFP. This information served as the basis for the creation of a map providing a snapshot of smokefree legislation in the EU. The map was also published in the second issue of the Spotlight on the FCTC, revealing that only nine of the 25 EU MS that have signed and ratified the WHO treaty have so far introduced largely comprehensive smokefree legislation, leaving over half of Europe’s workforce exposed to second-hand smoke.

As EU countries move to implement smoking bans in public places, the SFP provided expert advice to organisations when requested and responded to media enquiries on smokefree legislation in Europe. The SFP participated in two live interviews on national Czech television and on a press conference in support of an amendment to the smokefree legislation in favour of a comprehensive ban.

The SFP is a member of the Global Smokefree Partnership Executive Committee and is the chair of the working group on implementation of the guidelines of FCTC Article 8.

Taxation and smuggling of tobacco products

Price and tax measures are recognised as one of the most effective instruments to reduce tobacco consumption and substantial scientific evidence shows that higher cigarette prices result in lower overall cigarette consumption. Illicit trade in tobacco products contributes to tobacco consumption by making cigarettes available cheaply, undermining efforts to stop young people, in particular, from smoking. Illicit trade thus significantly diminishes the effectiveness of high tobacco taxation policies.

2008 saw good advances in the area of taxation and illicit trade. At international level, Parties to the FCTC started working towards developing a Protocol on illicit trade and met twice in Geneva. At the European level, the EC published its proposal for a Council Directive on the structure and rates of excise duty applied to manufactured tobacco.

Against this background the SFP, along with its partners and the Association of European Cancer Leagues, held a two-day seminar in Leuven on 3rd and 4th September to discuss taxation and illicit trade of tobacco products. The overall aim of the ‘Workshop on Taxation and Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products’ was twofold. Firstly, it aimed to present the new proposal of the EC and to provide participants with information on smuggling and illicit trade, as well as to outline the need for a strong protocol on illicit trade of tobacco products; and secondly, develop a
health perspective to ensure that health considerations are properly taken into consideration during the negotiations.

The workshop brought together over 50 participants, including key leading experts on taxation and smuggling, representatives from the European Commission, tobacco control advocates, as well as representatives from Health and Finance Ministries. The workshop offered an opportunity to provide participants with much-needed training on taxation and smuggling issues, and provided information on upcoming opportunities for action.

The broad range of participants and different types of expertise led to a lively discussion and participants agreed it was a very useful event. The discussions at the workshop and various presentations paved the way for the development of an advocacy toolkit on taxation, which will be used during discussions on taxation at national level in 2009. Indeed, despite the above policy opportunities, tobacco tax rules remain complex and only a handful of tobacco control advocates understand them. The SFP is planning to organise capacity building workshops in 2009 so as to provide tobacco control advocates with the necessary tools to build support for discussions on taxation at national level and in preparation for the third Intergovernmental Negotiating Body on a Protocol on Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products (IBN3) and the 4th COP.

**Tobacco as a key development issue**

Non-communicable diseases, and in particular tobacco, are climbing up the political agenda as the WHO, World Bank and other major donors start to focus on the impact of such health determinants in low-and-middle-income countries. However, more needs to be done to ensure that tobacco control receives adequate political attention and increasing resources at global level.

Discussions at COP-3 and negotiations for a Protocol on Illicit Trade show the growing awareness of the need to mobilise resources for the implementation of the FCTC, particularly in low-and middle-income countries.

As a result, the SFP, in close collaboration with the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (IUATLD), started work on promoting tobacco as a global health issue. This is a new area of work but progress has been made at national level and new partnerships have been forged with organisations working on development issues.

In 2008, the SFP carried out an in-depth analysis of the EU and the development assistance funding mechanisms and current policy frameworks of its MS. This scoping exercise involved indentifying resources that can be used to support the implementation of the FCTC and development policy trends, in order to assess future opportunities and challenges. This work allowed the SFP to provide organisations working on tobacco control and funding mechanisms with an overview of activities that could be carried out at all levels – national, European and international – to promote tobacco control as a global poverty and development issues and not just a health issue; and to provide guidance by flagging up funding opportunities and matching resources with needs.

"With regards to tobacco and the fight against smoking in the EU (beyond the actions undertaken at the local and country levels) it is essential to continue monitoring the situation and advocating for better tobacco control in Brussels. SFP is playing a key role in producing high quality papers, disseminating information, raising awareness and, above all, mobilising will and energy both within and outside the public health community. The work done this year on tobacco taxation has been extremely useful and we, at WHO/Europe, have used extensively and disseminated widely the documents SFP produced."

**Francois Decaillet**, Senior adviser, WHO-Regional Office for Europe
The SFP also developed a factsheet on tobacco and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) ‘How much do you know about tobacco and the Millennium Development Goals – facts and figures on tobacco use in low- and middle-income countries’. The factsheet compiles the latest evidence available on the health and economic impact of tobacco in low- and middle-income countries and highlights how effective tobacco control policies can contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable development.

Two sets of Questions & Answers on tobacco and development policy and the need to promote tobacco control as a key development issue were also produced in 2008. The set of ‘Q & As’ were specifically designed for policymakers, politicians and civil society representatives.

The SFP also responded to the EC consultation on Policy Coherence and raised awareness of the link between tobacco control, sustainable development and poverty reduction.

Framework Convention on Tobacco Control

In 2008 the COP continued the good work initiated in 2007 with the adoption of strong guidelines on Article 8 (smokefree public places), and adopted strong guidelines on Articles 5.3 (protection of public health policy with respect to tobacco control from the commercial and other vested interests of the tobacco industry), 11 (packaging and labelling) and 13 (advertising, promotion and sponsorship). The draft guidelines were developed in the course of 2008 and the SFP contributed to this work, in collaboration with the FCA.

The SFP attended the third conference of the Parties in November and worked, together with FCA, to ensure that strong guidelines on Article 5.3 were adopted. In 2008, Parties to the FCTC also moved towards developing a Protocol on Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products and met twice in Geneva to discuss the key elements that should be included in the protocol. Further work on price and tax measures, product regulation and liability will be taken further before the next COP meets.

SFP Information and media work

The SFP continues to offer comment and information to journalists. The SFP event on 15 July made front page of a number of European media as indicated in the report available on the website.

The SFP revamped its website in 2008 to make more information available to the general public and policy makers. New sections include facts and figures on mortality and cost of smoking related diseases to governments. Furthermore, the interactive maps on current smokefree legislation and smoking prevalence in EU Member States are now available.

« Chère madame Je tenais a vous remercier personnellement pour les contacts très utiles que nous avons établis à l’occasion de la troisième conférence des parties à la Convention internationale de lutte contre le tabagisme. Ces contacts ont contribués aux avancées obtenues, et la préparation de positions communes de l’Union européenne, sous Présidence française, en a également bénéficié. J’ai beaucoup apprécié le professionnalisme et l’efficacité de votre travail. Votre organisation apporte, de manière générale, un éclairage important à la lutte contre le tabagisme en contribuant très activement par les réunions qu’elle organise et les documents qu’elle diffuse aux débats qui ont lieu dans les instances européennes »

Jean-Baptiste Brunet, Conseiller Santé, Représentation Permanente de la France Auprès de l’Union Européenne
To ensure that the SFP continues to be independent and flexible, it receives income mainly from its Partners. In 2008 the SFP received direct contributions from the European Heart Network (EHN), the European Respiratory Society (ERS), Cancer Research UK (CR-UK) and the Institut National du Cancer (INCa). In 2008, the SFP also received 5000 Euros from Novartis, 5000 Euros from Pfizer and 5000 Euros from GSK. These unrestricted educational grants were used to finance the Leuven Seminar and the European interactive smokefree website.

SFP operates with minimal administrative costs to ensure that its funds are effectively and efficiently used, thus allowing most of the SFP’s funds to go directly to supporting advocacy work, publication and workshops.
Board members 2007-2008

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SFP is funded by the Cancer Research UK, the European Heart
Network, the European Respiratory Society and the Institut National
du Cancer and works in close collaboration with the International
Union against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease.