



Tobacco or Health in the European Union: past, present and future
The ASPECT report
Recommendations

Facts & Figures

- Smoking continues to be the largest single cause of death and disease in the European Union, despite the progress that has been made in tobacco control.
- Over 650,000 European are killed every year because they smoke, one in seven of all deaths across the EU
- Over 13 million people are suffering from a serious, chronic disease as a result of their smoking
- 1 in 4 of all deaths from cancer in the EU is caused by smoking
- 3 in 10 of all deaths from all respiratory diseases are caused by smoking
- 1 in 10 of all deaths from cardiovascular diseases in the EU is caused by smoking
- The ASPECT report puts the annual cost of tobacco related disease in the EU at EUR 100 billion – or 1% of GDP

Recommendations

Organisational and structural recommendations: investment and regulatory capacity

- Member States and the EC need to affirm their commitment to tobacco control and to reducing tobacco-related morbidity and mortality by ratifying and implementing the FCTC.
- Implementing comprehensive tobacco-control strategies will require much greater levels of investment in tobacco control across the EC. Economic evidence indicates that tobacco-control interventions are the second most cost-effective way to spend health funds, after childhood immunization.
- Implementing comprehensive tobacco-control strategies will also require much greater regulatory capacity and expertise. A preferred option is for Member States to create national dedicated agencies to coordinate tobacco-control strategy
- The report recommends that resources at the EU level are secured and sustained in the future. Existing European sources of funding, such as those available from the Tobacco Fund, should be targeted at the most effective smoking prevention measures and used to complement Member States actions
- Capacity to assess and regulate nicotine and tobacco products in the Commission and Member States needs to be greatly increased and include the range of technical skills needed. At European level this could be provided by an extension of existing



capacity within the European Commission and/or the establishment of a European tobacco and nicotine products regulatory agency

- The remit of such an agency would include all aspects of tobacco and nicotine product design and marketing, as well as risk analysis and risk assessment
- Until regulatory capacity can be increased, a multidisciplinary tobacco product regulatory advisory committee should be set up urgently at European level to advise on tobacco regulation
- It is essential that all regulatory and advisory capacity at Member State and European level be independent of all tobacco industry influence
- Increased capacity is needed at civil society level for tobacco control. Partnerships are needed with a wider range of stakeholders in society to ensure the success of smoking prevention strategies

The need for greater research capacity

- Greater research capacity needed. A strong science base for tobacco-control policy and interventions is essential to improve societal understanding of the effects of tobacco on health and to best direct resources towards its control
- A research seminar should be convened at European level to assess EU and international tobacco research capacity, coordination and funding, and develop a coordinated EU tobacco research strategy
- An increase in tobacco research funding will be required. At EU level tobacco research should be given its own budget line in the next Research Framework Programme (2007-2013). European budget lines, such as the sixth framework programme, should be applied to tobacco research.
- Strengthened national capacity is needed to develop tobacco-control research strategies, coordinate national programmes and oversee implementation, in coordination with national tobacco-control bodies and national research organisations

Recommendations on specific smoking prevention interventions

Taxation

- Regular increases in tobacco taxes should be an implicit part of government efforts at EU and Member State level as these underpin other tobacco-control measures
- Differences in tax rates should be harmonised on the basis of specific rates as opposed to ad valorem
- The tax on "roll your own" tobacco should be raised to prevent substitution towards this form of tobacco products
- Tobacco should be removed from the Consumer Price Index
- Increase international cooperation to coordinate taxation policies and combat smuggling is needed
- Early negotiations of an FCTC protocol on illicit trade, taking as a minimum the of the EU-Philip Morris International agreement to combat smuggling and counterfeiting and any subsequent directive based upon it



Advertising and sales promotion

- All member States, that have not done so should enact comprehensive tobacco advertising bans, including bans on point of sale displays, in line with the conditions of FCTC ratification
- All types of sales promotion should be banned

Tobacco outlets

- Internet sales of tobacco products should be prohibited as well as the sale of tobacco products in vending machines

Smoke-free work and public places

- The EU and Member States should follow the Environmental Protection Agency, IARC and the Finish and German governments and classify secondhand smoke as an occupational carcinogen
- Legislation prohibiting smoking in all workplaces would have most impact if enacted at European level
- EC legislation should be supplemented by Member States legislation to include public places that are not workplaces

Cessation strategies

- All Member States that have not done so should develop national smoking cessation and treatment strategies

Tobacco product regulation

- A new comprehensive regulatory framework for all tobacco and nicotine products needs to be implemented
- Comprehensive disclosure of the physical, chemical and design characteristics of all tobacco products should be required and made public
- Directive 2001/37/EC should be improved by adoption of the WHO's Study Group on Tobacco Product Regulation Definition for ingredients
- The tobacco industry is required to fully disclose additives used in their products according to the letter and spirit of the Directive
- Member States and the EC should agree a harmonised system for receiving the required information on ingredients and emissions from tobacco. A harmonised system should also be established for Member States to analyse, verify and then report this information to the European Commission
- A common list of ingredients cannot be produced until scientifically agreed criteria have been drawn up to assess the toxicity and addictiveness of ingredients and their public health impact
- Further research and analysis is needed to create scientifically sound criteria for any approval or prohibition of ingredients



- In view of the fact that it is technologically and economically feasible for cigarettes to meet fire safety standards, tobacco manufacturers should be required to produce and market only "fire-safe" (or "reduce-ignition propensity) cigarettes in the EU
- Harmful constituents of tobacco and tobacco smoke should be reduced and ultimately removed where feasible
- Member States and the European Commission need to begin to assess injury risk from tobacco products
- Communication relating to health aspects of different tobacco and nicotine products and any changes in their characteristics should be strictly regulated. The mandatory phasing out of toxic constituents should not be accompanied by any health claims
- Any new tobacco product of any kind, including new brands of cigarettes, must be given prior approval by regulators before entry to the market

Labelling and packaging

- Effective pictorial health warnings should be made mandatory on both sides of all tobacco products. These warnings should cover at least 50% of each of the two largest surfaces
- The requirements for tobacco manufacturers and importers to print tar, nicotine and CO yields on packs should be rescinded. The remaining space on packs should be reserved for health and consumer information messages to be agreed upon by the European Commission and Member States

Tobacco industry surveillance

- There is a need for ongoing, comprehensive surveillance of tobacco industry activity across the European region
- Member States and the Community must ensure the fullest possible levels of transparency in all dealings with the tobacco industry

The Smoke Free Partnership is a new strategic, independent and flexible partnership between Cancer Research UK, the European Respiratory Society and the Institut National du Cancer.

It aims to promote tobacco control advocacy and policy research at EU and national levels in collaboration with other EU health organisations and EU tobacco control networks.

Smoke Free Partnership

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