

Europe's Beating Cancer Plan - Draft proposal

Achieving a tobacco-free Europe

Tobacco consumption continues to be the leading preventable cause of cancer with 27% of all cancers attributed to tobacco use. [1] By eliminating tobacco use, 90% of lung cancers may be avoided.

Through rigorous enforcement of the EU tobacco control framework and its adaptation to new developments and market trends, including stricter rules on novel products [2], starting in 2021, Europe's Beating Cancer Plan will help create a "**Tobacco Free Generation**", where less than 5% of the population uses tobacco by 2040. As an interim step, the goal is to reach the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and WHO target of a 30% relative reduction of tobacco use rates by 2025 as compared to 2010. This would correspond to a prevalence of smoking of about 20% in the EU[3].

The Commission will continue to prioritise protecting young people from the harmful effects of tobacco and related products [4]. Tobacco taxation is one of the most effective instruments to fight tobacco consumption, particularly in deterring young people from taking up smoking. Decisive action will be taken to reduce the attractiveness of tobacco and related products by reviewing the **Tobacco Products Directive**, the **Tobacco Taxation Directive**, and the **legal framework on cross border purchases of tobacco by private individuals**. This includes working towards plain packaging and a gull ban on flavours, using existing EU agencies to improve the assessment of ingredients, extending taxation to novel tobacco products, and tackling tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship, namely on the internet and social media.

By 2023, the Commission will **update the Council Recommendation on Smoke-Free Environments**, and recommend to extend its coverage to emerging products, such as e-cigarettes and heated tobacco products and to strengthen smoke-free environments, for instance concerning outdoor public places. The Cancer Plan will also support Member States to improve enforcement of the existing legislation within their overall tobacco control strategies, including sales to minors and smoking cessation campaigns, enabling better implementation of **the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control**. In addition, the EU track and trace system will be extended to all tobacco products by 2024

[1]

<https://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/disease-prevention/tobacco/news/news/2020/2/tobacco-use-causes-almost-one-third-of-cancer-deaths-in-the-who-european-region>

[2] For instance novel tobacco products, e-cigarettes, herbal products for smoking.

[3]

https://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/340193/TOBACCO-CONTROL-AND-THE-SUSTAINABLE-DEVELOPMENT-GOALS_Edited.pdf

[4] According to the Eurobarometer data, the trend has reversed for youth smoking rates (ages 15-24) which went down to 20% in 2020, from 25% in 2014, following a peak of 29% in 2017.