



SPECTRUM

SHAPING PUBLIC HEALTH POLICIES  
TO REDUCE INEQUALITIES AND HARM

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# Tobacco industry tactics and preventing industry influence in tobacco endgame

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(with thanks to Dr Allen Gallagher and Professor Anna Gilmore for their contributions)

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# Conflict of interest declaration

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- The Tobacco Control Research Group (TCRG) is part of the SPECTRUM Research Consortium, a multi-university, multi-agency research consortium funded by the UK Prevention Research Partnership (UKPRP) dedicated to understanding commercial influences on health and health inequalities. TCRG and SPECTRUM do not accept funding from unhealthy commodity industries (UCIs), including manufacturers of tobacco, alcohol or ultra-processed food and drinks.
- **Statement on funding**
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  - **SPECTRUM:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.7488/era/2074>

# Terminology

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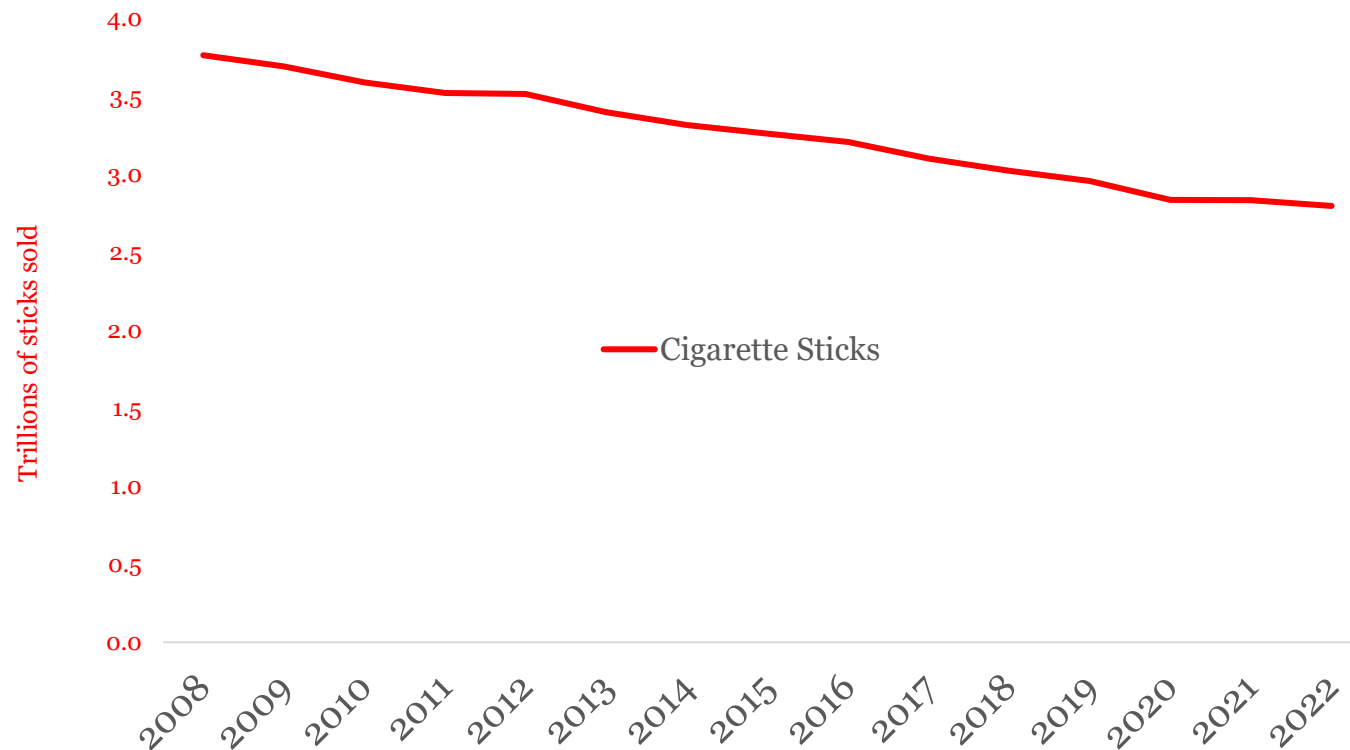
*Endgame*: Radical governance approach to (re)shape the “structural, political and social dynamics that sustain the tobacco epidemic [and] end it within a specific timeframe” (McDaniel et al, 2015).

*Harm reduction*: Public health approach focused on reducing the health and social risks associated with addictive behaviours at both individual and population levels (Klein et al, 2022).

*Transformation*: Tobacco companies that “demonstrate substantial, rapid and verifiable progress towards eliminating the production and sale of conventional tobacco products within 5 years in all markets where [they] operat[e]” (Edwards et al, 2022).

# Endgame from a tobacco industry perspective

## Global cigarette sales (excluding China) steadily declining



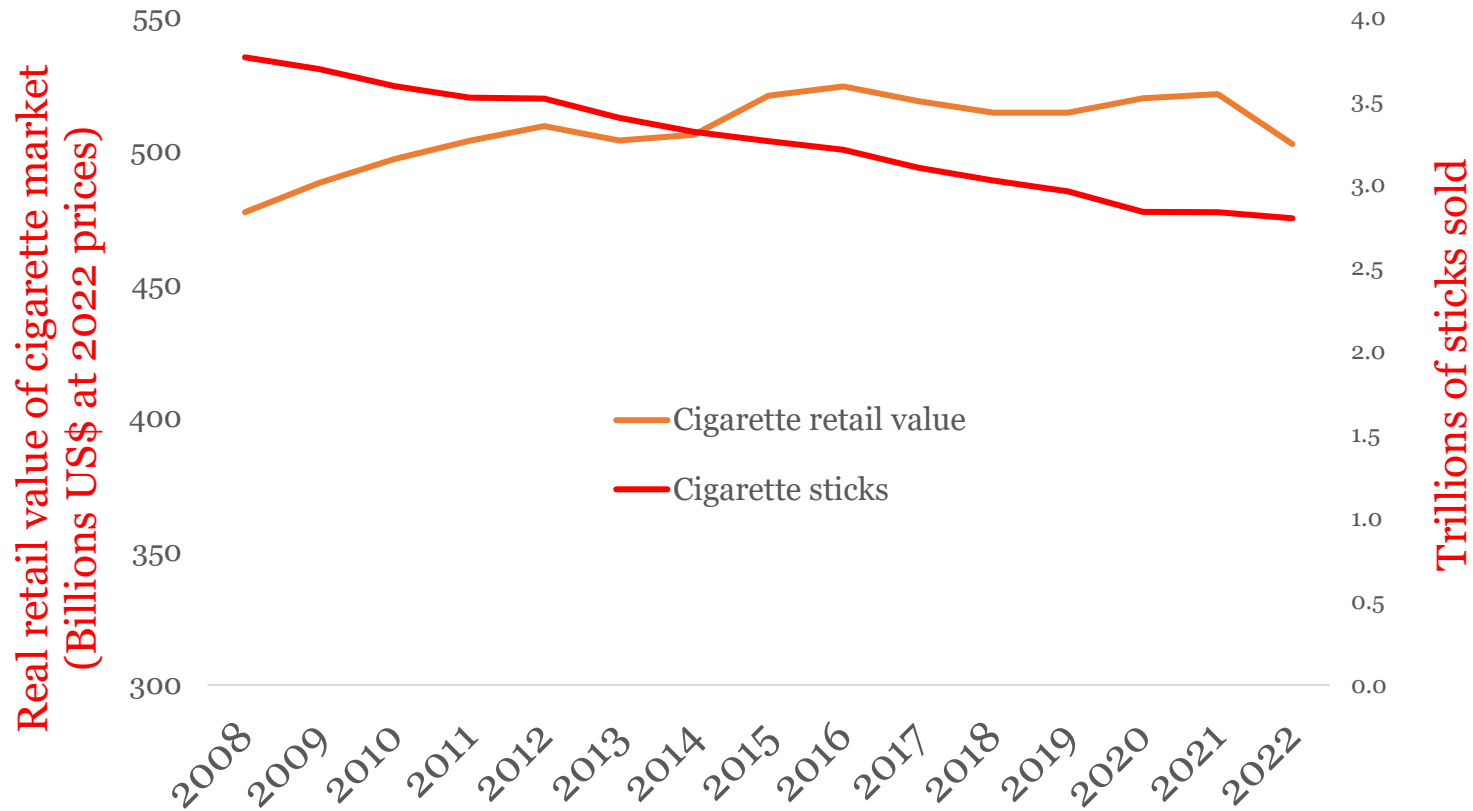
Source: Euromonitor, downloaded 2023, our figure

**A**dvancements in implementation of tobacco control policies taking place around the world.

**S**ince at least 2000, smoking prevalence rates have been steadily declining.

**TTCs** have responded to this by vehemently opposing tobacco control measures using both familiar and novel strategies to protect their sales and profits.

# 'Retail value' from cigarettes falling



From TTCs' perspective, Endgame is already happening.

Source: Euromonitor, downloaded 2023, our figure

# Blowing smoke: TTC claims of going 'smokefree'



PHILIP MORRIS

FOUNDATION FOR A  
SMOKE-FREE WORLD

## OUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION WE'RE TRYING TO GIVE UP CIGARETTES

Philip Morris is known for cigarettes. Every year, many smokers give them up. **Now it's our turn.**

Our ambition is to stop selling cigarettes in the UK. It won't be easy.

But we are determined to turn our vision into reality. There are 7.6 million adults in the UK who smoke. **The best action they can take is to quit smoking.** Many will succeed.

But many will continue to smoke. That's why we want to replace cigarettes with products, such as e-cigarettes and heated tobacco, which are a better choice for the millions of men and women in the UK who would otherwise not stop smoking.

So far, we have invested £2.5bn on research and development. And it's making a difference. **We've introduced new products in many countries,** and millions of adult smokers have abandoned cigarettes and switched to better options.

No cigarette company has done anything like this before. You might wonder if we really mean it. We do – and we're therefore making these commitments for 2018:

- Launch a website and campaign to provide smokers with information on quitting and on alternatives to cigarettes;
- Offer to support Local Authority cessation services where smoking rates are highest;
- Seek Government approval to insert, directly into our cigarette packs, information on quitting and on switching;
- Expand the availability of new, alternative products in the UK.

Quitting smoking – or never starting – is always best. For those who would not otherwise stop, there are better alternatives than continuing to smoke. You can find out more about quitting and about alternatives to smoking at [www.smokefreefuture.co.uk](http://www.smokefreefuture.co.uk)



Committed to Building A Better Tomorrow™



Our Purpose

To reduce the  
health impact  
of our business



Our Commitment

To provide adult  
consumers with a wide  
range of enjoyable and  
less risky products\*

To encourage smokers to  
switch completely to  
scientifically-substantiated  
reduced-risk alternatives\*

*"A better future is built around trust,  
transparency, and inclusion."*

Jaek Olczak  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Philip Morris International



LEARN MORE

UNSMOKE  
THE FUTURE



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# Evaluating tobacco industry 'transformation': a proposed rubric and analysis

Richard Edwards ,<sup>1</sup> Janet Hoek ,<sup>1</sup> Nancy Karreman,<sup>2</sup> Anna Gilmore<sup>3</sup>

Criteria to evaluate credibility of industry's endgame claims:

**E**vidence of substantial progress towards eliminating the production, distribution, marketing and sales of conventional tobacco products within 5 years=**No tobacco company has committed to ending the production and sale of conventional tobacco products in all its markets.**

**E**vidence of action to reduce uptake and eliminate disparities in use of conventional tobacco products=**TTCs continue to obstruct policies that aim to reduce smoking uptake and to market conventional products to young people and marginalised populations.**

**N**o obstruction of core and innovative tobacco control measures in any jurisdiction=**TTCs continue to impede and oppose evidence-based tobacco control policies across the world.**

**R**eplacement of conventional tobacco products with acceptable alternative products or services =**TTCs that claim to be transforming are developing new products such as heated tobacco products (HTPs) which are not independently established reduced risk products.**

# TTC investments and acquisitions

## E-cigarettes



PMI  
Altria  
BAT  
Imperial  
JTI

## HTPs



PMI  
Altria  
BAT  
Imperial  
JTI

## Snus and oral nicotine



PMI  
Altria  
BAT  
Imperial  
JTI

## Cannabis



PMI  
Altria  
BAT  
Imperial

## Pharmaceuticals



PMI  
BAT  
JTI



# Potential risk of TTCs becoming multi-addiction companies

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## 2. Drug Diversification

In a world of increased government intervention, B.A.T should learn to look at itself as a drug company rather than as a tobacco company. The mood affecting drug requirements of the population

marked effect will be in one of these areas in each case:-

(a) Chemically engineered cigarette (process)

opiates), marijuana, nicotine analogues, etc. At present, the taking of many of these drugs is either medically prescribed or regarded as deviant behaviour, but could be 'socialised' like alcoholic drinking and tobacco smoking. The diversification programme would have to include (i) what to administer, (ii) how to administer it, and (iii) how to encourage social acceptability. Initial research

# Understanding the long-term policy influence strategies of the tobacco industry: two contemporary case studies FREE

 Thomas R Hird <sup>1</sup>,  Allen William Andrew Gallagher <sup>1</sup>, Karen Evans-Reeves <sup>1</sup>, Mateusz Zatoński <sup>1</sup>, Sarah Dance <sup>1</sup>, Pascal A Diethelm <sup>2</sup>,  Richard Edwards <sup>3</sup>,  Anna B Gilmore <sup>1</sup>

## Norm shaping and redefining issues

- PMI docs (2014) reveal strategy to appropriate harm reduction language to renormalize its image
- Companies working to be seen as part of the solution, including for endgame

## Controlling data and science

- ‘PMI Science’, ‘Foundation for a Smoke Free World’, ‘PMI IMPACT’ all examples of industry controlling scientific agenda via direct funding.

## Increasing use of third parties

- “third party coalition building” (*to create an* “alliance of credible messengers” (PMI, 2014)
- PMI continues to be sole funder of FSFW

**Euromonitor International now accepts tobacco industry funding: a win for PMI at the expense of research on the tobacco industry**

Allen Gallagher, Anna Gilmore

# Winning the battles but losing the war in tobacco control?

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## The “Battles”

- Responding to industry efforts to oppose or undermine tobacco control legislation at national level
- Largely responsive in nature



## The “War”

- Achieving global support for endgame initiatives, which is undermined by tobacco industry misinformation
- Requires pro-active action (e.g. predicting industry’s next steps)

# Challenges of addressing TI interference in tobacco endgame

## Contents

### Commentary

- s1** Firm foundation or neglected cornerstone? The paradox of Article 5.3 implementation and the challenge of strengthening tobacco control governance  
*R Ralston, S Bialous, J Collin*

### Original research

- s5** 'They have a right to participate as a stakeholder': Article 5.3 implementation and government interactions with the tobacco industry in Ethiopia  
*S Hirpa, R Ralston, W Deressa, J Collin*
- s12** 'That is a Ministry of Health thing': Article 5.3 implementation in Uganda and the challenge of whole-of-government accountability  
*D Male, R Ralston, K Nyamurungi, J Collin*
- s18** Understanding the dynamics of notification and implementation of Article 5.3 across India's states and union territories  
*S Bassi, R Ralston, M Arora, A Chugh, G P Nazar, J Collin*

## June 2022 Volume 31 Supplement 1

- s26** Institutional tensions, corporate social responsibility and district-level governance of tobacco industry interference: analysing challenges in local implementation of Article 5.3 measures in Karnataka, India  
*P Kumar, R A Barry, M M Kulkarni, V G Kamath, R Ralston, J Collin*
- s33** 'A contradiction between our state and the tobacco company': conflicts of interest and institutional constraints as barriers to implementing Article 5.3 in Bangladesh  
*S M Abdullah, T Wagner-Rizvi, R Huque, S Kanan, S Huque, R Ralston, J Collin*
- s39** Challenges of conflict of interest, coordination and collaboration in small island contexts: towards effective tobacco control governance in UK Overseas Territories  
*R A Barry, S E Hill, S Williams, J Collin*
- s46** Advancing whole-of-government approaches to tobacco control: Article 5.3 and the challenge of policy coordination in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India and Uganda  
*R A Barry, S M Abdullah, A Chugh, S Hirpa, P Kumar, D Male, R Ralston, T Wagner-Rizvi, J Collin*
- s53** Norms, rules and policy tools: understanding Article 5.3 as an instrument of tobacco control governance  
*R Ralston, S Hirpa, S Bassi, D Male, P Kumar, R A Barry, J Collin*

Wider governance norms focused on stakeholder engagement and consultation (Hirpa et al, 2022)

Limited responsibilities in tobacco control by government agencies beyond health (Male et al, 2022)

Requirements that large companies donate 2% of annual net revenue to social causes (Kumar et al, 2022)

Shared coordination challenges across five different geographical contexts (Barry et al, 2022)

# Conclusions and ways forward

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Tobacco endgame strategies are inconsistent with TTC goals of profit maximisation

TTCs are unlikely to voluntarily transition away from tobacco products

Evidence of ongoing efforts to develop and market cigarette product innovations and oppose effective tobacco control measures illustrates that TTCs respond to commercial incentives to maintain or grow the size of the cigarette market

TTC interference will adapt and intensify as tobacco endgame strategies increase (e.g., norm shaping, controlling data and science and operating via front groups)

Prioritising implementation of WHO FCTC and Article 5.3 is critical

Pro-active approaches that move beyond fighting the “battles” to responding to the “war” are critical to the overall success of global tobacco control