



How are European countries progressing towards tobacco endgame? Findings from JATC 2

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Background

- In 2021, the Europe's Beating Cancer Plan established a 'Tobacco-Free Generation' goal where less than 5% of the population uses tobacco by 2040 in Europe
- The JATC 2 Work Package 9 “**Best practices to develop an effective and comprehensive tobacco endgame strategy**” aims to provide tools to put forward actions in line with this goal

Deliverables

- D9.1: Report of tobacco endgame strategies for the European region
 - Summary report in April 2023, to be published on JATC 2 website after the research articles are available
- D9.2: Recommendations for research on forward-looking tobacco control policies and tobacco endgame strategies (February 2024)
- D9.3: EU Tobacco Endgame Toolkit to disseminate best practices in the development, implementation and evaluation of tobacco endgame strategies (July 2024)

Objective 9.1: To identify and assess tobacco endgame strategies and forward-looking tobacco control policies for the European region.

- **Task 9.1a:** Identify and map forward-looking tobacco control policies and tobacco endgame strategies
 - **Task 9.1b:** Assess the inclusion of cessation support (WHO FCTC Article 14) to these policies and strategies
 - **Task 9.1c:** Synthesize the available evidence and identify the needs for future research
 - **Task 9.1d:** Assess the feasibility of their translation into the development of national policies and strategies
- Questionnaire developed and distributed
 - 1 scientific article draft in partner review
 - Integration of key results to D9.1
 - Analysis of current status in tobacco control conducted with WHO FCTC & MPOWER data
 - 1 scientific article in press in Tobacco Induces Diseases
 - Integration of key results to D9.1
 - Literature review ongoing
 - 1 scientific article draft in partner review
 - Integration of key results to D9.2
 - Feasibility assessment ongoing
 - Guidance document drafted in collaboration with WP4
 - Integration to D9.3 online toolkit

Objective 9.2: To explore best practices in the development, implementation and evaluation of tobacco endgame strategies and forward-looking tobacco control policies.

- **Task 9.2a:** Explore national best practices in the development, implementation and evaluation
- **Task 9.2b:** Identify the typical enablers and constraints in the development, implementation and evaluation
- **Interviews in 6 partner countries in spring 2023**
 - 2 more countries pending, analyses about to begin
 - 1 scientific article to be developed
 - Case studies for D9.3 toolkit

Objective 9.3: To promote best practices and facilitate the development of national tobacco endgame strategies in Europe, in synergy with WP4 and other WPs.

- **Task 9.3a:** Define and introduce the concepts of forward-looking tobacco control policies and tobacco endgame
- **Task 9.3b:** Disseminate and promote best practices in the development, implementation and evaluation of forward-looking tobacco control policies and tobacco endgame strategies
- "How to develop, implement and evaluate tobacco endgame strategies – case studies from Europe" 4 Nov 2021
- "Making the tobacco endgame a reality" 7 Nov 2023
- Other external events
- D9.3 online toolkit

Tobacco endgame strategies and forward-looking tobacco control policies included in JATC-2 WP9

CORE MEASURES OF THE WHO FCTC

REQUIRED policies/measures
MPOWER (“best buys”)

ADVANCED WHO FCTC MEASURES

RECOMMENDED policies/measures

INNOVATIVE MEASURES

Other policies or measures aiming at tobacco endgame

Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan:

Tobacco-Free Generation

“Less than 5% of the population uses tobacco by 2040”

The interim goal: WHO target of a 30% relative reduction in tobacco use by 2025 as compared to 2010.

SCOPE OF THE PRODUCTS

All tobacco products (WHO FCTC)

- Heated tobacco products: defined as tobacco products at COP8, subject to the provisions of the WHO FCTC.

Novel nicotine products, as appropriate:

- General obligations, Article 5.2b of the WHO FCTC: Each Party shall, in accordance with its capabilities, adopt and implement effective legislative, executive, administrative and/or other measures and cooperate, as appropriate, with other Parties in developing appropriate policies for preventing and reducing tobacco consumption, nicotine addiction and exposure to tobacco smoke.
- Electronic nicotine/non-nicotine delivery systems (ENDS/ENNDS): Minimum of implementation of the COP7 regulatory options.

Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products

After <5% public health defined and regulated harm reduction, in line with Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC

Progress towards tobacco endgame

WP9 questionnaire:

- Responses from 24 out of 50 contacted countries in the WHO European region (19 of the 27 EU member states)
- The response rates were of 48% in the region and 70% within the EU.
- Responding countries: Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Czechia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Uzbekistan

Progress towards tobacco endgame

Based on the WP9 tobacco endgame questionnaire:

General population goals set at <5% prevalence level:

- **Ireland** and **Sweden** by 2025
- **Finland** by 2030
- **Slovenia** by 2040

Generational goals:

- **France:** children born since 2014 the first generation to reach <5% smoking prevalence as adults by 2032.
- **The Netherlands:** 0% smoking prevalence among youth and pregnant women, <5% smoking prevalence among 18+ population by 2040.
- **Belgium:** no/almost no new tobacco users, <5% tobacco use prevalence among 15+ population by 2040.
- **Norway:** tobacco-free generation for all born in 2010 or later, and <5% smoking and snus use prevalence in the general population (no set timeline)

Progress towards tobacco endgame

- All countries except Sweden cover also some other than combustible tobacco products
- Broadest coverage in Belgium, Finland, the Netherlands and Slovenia: **all tobacco products, e-cigarettes and non-pharmaceutical nicotine products**
 - Norway includes all these in their tobacco-free generation goal, but the general population goal covers only combustible tobacco and snus (smokeless tobacco)
- Belgium, Finland and Norway refine their goals specifically to daily use
- **Tobacco endgame objective integrated to Tobacco Act**
 - **in Finland** (from 2010, amended in 2016): to end the use of tobacco products and other nicotine-containing products that are toxic to humans and cause addiction
 - **in Norway** (from 2013): to create a tobacco-free society

Progress towards tobacco endgame

Proposals from governmental bodies or other relevant organizations or entities

- **Denmark:** Nicotine-Free Generation as part of health reform proposal in 2022
- **Germany:** The German Cancer Research Center strategy for tobacco-free Germany, supported by several entities. Additionally, the German strategy for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) contains a goal of 7% prevalence of smoking among young people by 2030
- **Italy:** scientific societies have formed an alliance to promote the development of a national tobacco endgame strategy
- Three other countries reported that there has been a proposal for an endgame goal/objective, but no information was yet publicly available

Progress towards tobacco endgame

Examples of product-oriented innovative measures in Europe:

- Product standards to substantially reduce appeal or remove most toxic products:
 - **Flavour bans that exceed TPD:** Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands, Norway (planned)
 - **Reducing the appeal of cigarette:** Ban on slim cigarettes in Ireland, Hungary, the Netherlands; standardized appearance of individual cigarette, nicotine e-liquid, and e-cigarette refill container in Finland; health warnings to individual cigarettes under consideration in Norway
 - **Ban on combustibles or novel tobacco products:** Ban on imports and sales of waterpipe tobacco in Norway; authorization scheme for novel tobacco products in Norway, Germany
 - **Ban on new non-pharmaceutical nicotine products:** Ban on nicotine pouches in Belgium, the Netherlands (announced); authorization scheme in Portugal

Progress towards tobacco endgame

Examples of retail-oriented innovative measures in Europe:

- **New stepwise reductions:**

- The Netherlands: Tobacco and related products may no longer be sold in supermarkets from 2024; legislation prepared for a sales ban in petrol stations from 2030 – sales will be allowed only in specialist stores from 2032 (e-cigarettes from 2025)
- Belgium: Ban on temporary points of sale (including festivals) from January 2025, ban on tobacco and e-cigarette sales in large supermarkets (>400m²) from July 2025
- Norway: New strategy states that the availability of retailers should be substantially reduced (no concrete proposals yet)
- Finland: Increased supervisory fees and prohibiting the granting of a retail license to temporary and mobile sales places proposed by a ministerial working group

- **Incentives to give up tobacco sales:**

- France: a protocol to support tobacconists in their transformation to other local shops

Progress towards tobacco endgame

Examples of user-oriented innovative measures in Europe:

- **Age limits:**

- Norway: Earlier proposal to raise the age limit for e-cigarettes to 25; new strategy proposes a tobacco and nicotine free generation for those born in 2010 and later (not decided yet whether age limit would be raised gradually or by birth year)
- Slovenia: National strategy foresees raising the age of tobacco sales from 18 to 21.
- The Netherlands: The government is investigating the feasibility of raising the age limit to 21.
- Finland: Raising the age limit for sales and possession of all tobacco and non-pharmaceutical nicotine products from 18 to 20 proposed by a ministerial working group.

Progress towards tobacco endgame

What is mostly missing:

- Market-oriented and other innovative measures that would gradually phase out combustibles, and tap on industry profits
- Concrete tools to prevent and counter industry influence (e.g. Code of Conduct, strong guidelines and legislation)

Enablers and challenges



- In countries with tobacco endgame goals, the expectations of the WP9 questionnaire respondents related to achieving the goal were moderately positive
- Concerns were expressed especially in relation to **non-combustible products and new nicotine products, cross-border marketing, high smoking prevalence in some population groups, and sustaining political will.**
- More variation in the expectations for adopting such goals: **Concerns focus on lack of political will and challenges in the implementation or strengthening of the existing tobacco control regulations, and on tobacco industry.**
 - Having set earlier prevalence reduction goals seen as a strength to continue towards tobacco endgame goals.
 - Some found that their current addiction or NCD prevention strategies were not suitable for including tobacco endgame goals.

Enablers and challenges

- Feasibility of accomplishing the regional Tobacco-Free Generation goal may be **hampered by the low implementation of WHO FCTC** in several countries.
- At the same time, **regional goal can be utilized to facilitate the establishment of national goals, and provide the opportunity to bring the need for strengthened WHO FCTC implementation to the political agenda** as part of the national measures for achieving the goal

Conclusions



- Interest to tobacco endgame is growing in Europe:
 - **Officially adopted or acknowledged tobacco endgame goals were reported by 8 countries** from the WHO European region (7 from EU)
 - **Proposals from government, civil society or research entities in 6 EU countries**
- Of the innovative tobacco endgame measures, more wide-spread implementation is awaited especially for **retail- and user-oriented measures that reduce the number of sales points and increase age limits**
- Most countries still need to strengthen the implementation of the WHO FCTC and prepare with concrete tools to prevent industry influence
- Allowing industry to retain/increase profits enables it to mobilize resources for lobbying against tobacco endgame and distracting policymaking from timely and effective measures



Thank you!

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CO-FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION'S HEALTH PROGRAMME
UNDER GRANT AGREEMENT N° 101035968 / JA-01-2020 (HADEA)