

Commission of the European Communities  
Green Paper  
Towards a Europe free from tobacco smoke: policy options at EU level

Scientific evidence of the carcinogenic nature of tobacco smoke is overwhelming and convincing. Several independent scientific bodies have evaluated the evidence and classified environmental tobacco smoke as a human carcinogen (e.g. IARC, EPA of US). Based on this fact, the only reasonable administrative conclusion is a total ban of smoking in all public places, including workplaces, and protection of the people on equal grounds.

Question

(1) Which of the two approaches suggested in Section IV would be more desirable in terms of its scope for smoke-free initiative: a total ban on smoking in all enclosed public spaces and workplaces or a ban with exemptions granted to selected categories of venues? Please indicate the reason(s) for your choice.

Answer

1. Total ban of indoor smoking in all public premises is the only practical solution. There should be special restrictions near the premises of schools and other places with children or adolescence.

Question

(2) Which of the policy options described in Section V would be the most desirable and appropriate for promoting smoke-free environments? What form of EU intervention do you consider necessary to achieve the smoke-free objectives?

Answer

2. The only way to protect the people of all ages is a binding legislative measure with no exceptions. This choice is fully compatible with Article 7 and 8 of the FCTC.

Binding legislation would create an enforceable basic level of protection against ETS in all EU member states. Finnish experience based on the national legislation in 2000-2007 and the studies done by the Finnish Institute of Occupational Institute clearly prove that other than comprehensive smoke-free legislation does not work in practice and treat all workers equally.

Question

(3) Are there any further quantitative or qualitative data on the health, social or economic impact of smoke-free policies which should be taken into account?

Answer

3. Constitution of the World Health Organization, Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women and Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights all underline the human right to the highest possible standards of health and the right to the healthy environment. These must be the guiding principles of our thinking and actions.

Question

(4) Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the Green Paper?

Answer

4. No.

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