

2008 EUROBAROMETER SURVEY ON TOBACCO

KEY MESSAGES

Support for smoke-free places:

- The survey confirms **the overwhelming support that smoke-free policies have in the EU.**
- A majority of EU citizens support smoke-free public places, such as offices, restaurants and bars. Support for workplace smoking restrictions is slightly higher than support for such restrictions in restaurants (84% vs. 79%). Two-thirds support smoke-free bars, pubs and clubs. These results are in line with those obtained in the 2006 Eurobarometer survey.

Exposure to tobacco smoke:

- In 2006, the Special Eurobarometer showed that a third (32%) of respondents was exposed to tobacco smoke at the workplace. Even if there seems to be a trend towards the reduction of exposure to tobacco smoke at the workplace in Europe, in 2008, **a fifth (19%) of respondents who work outside the home are still exposed to tobacco smoke** at their workplace on a daily basis

Pictorial warnings:

- More than half (55%) of EU citizens believe that adding a colour picture to a text-only health warning on a cigarette pack would **strengthen the effectiveness of the text-only warning.**

THE CONTEXT

Tobacco is the single largest cause of avoidable death; it accounts for over half a million deaths each year in the EU. It is estimated that 25% of all cancer deaths and 15% of all deaths in the European Union could be attributed to smoking.

In order to curb this epidemic, the EU is actively developing a comprehensive tobacco control policy. This is characterised by:

- Legislative measures: Tobacco Products Directive¹, Advertising Directive² and their implementation reports^{3,4,5} and a Recommendation on prevention⁶.
- support for Europe-wide smoking prevention and cessation activities: Public Health Programme⁷

¹ Directive 2001/37/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 June 2001 on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States concerning the manufacture, presentation and sale of tobacco products.

² Directive 2003/33/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 May 2003 on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States relating to the advertising and sponsorship of tobacco products.

³ Report from the Commission - COM(2005) 339 final - to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee – First Report on the application of the Tobacco Products Directive.

⁴ Report from the Commission - COM(2007) 754 final - to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee – Second Report on the application of the Tobacco Products Directive.

⁵ Report from the Commission - COM(2008) 330 final - to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee – Report on the implementation of the Tobacco Advertising Directive (2003/33/EC).

⁶ Council Recommendation 2003/54/EC of 2 December 2002 on the prevention of smoking and on initiatives to improve tobacco control.

⁷ Decision No 1350/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 establishing a second programme of Community action in the field of health (2008-13).

- mainstreaming tobacco control into a range of other Community policies (e.g. the domains of taxation⁸, agriculture and development) and,
- establishing the EU as a major player in tobacco control at a global level (WHO-Framework Convention on Tobacco Control⁹)

In addition, the Tobacco Products Directive allows Member States to complement the textual warnings on cigarette packages with pictorial warnings. The European Commission adopted a library of selected source documents containing the colour photographs¹⁰.

⁸ Proposal for a Council Directive amending Directives 92/79/EEC, 92/80/EEC and 95/59/EC on the structure and rates of excise duty applied on manufactured tobacco. COM(2008) 459/2.

⁹ The Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) is the first ever negotiated international public health treaty, covering the whole range of tobacco-control related activities. So far, 163 Parties have ratified the Convention, among these are 26 Member States and the European Community.

¹⁰ Commission Decision 2006/1502/EC amending Commission Decision C(2005) 1452 final of 26 May 2005 on the library of selected source documents containing colour photographs or other illustrations for each of the additional warnings listed in Annex 1 to Directive 2001/37/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council.

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SUMMARY REPORT

Objective

The 2008 Eurobarometer survey on tobacco focused on:

- the smoking habits and consumption patterns of non-combustible tobacco products
- issues around smoke-free environments
- the perceived effectiveness of health warnings on tobacco packs

With regard to smoke-free environments, it examined the exposure to tobacco smoke at home and at the workplace, the status of workplace smoking restrictions and the attitudes towards smoking restrictions in public places.

In addition, it also included questions on the extent of tobacco products being bought online, the purchase of lower-priced cigarettes in other EU countries and the contact with potentially smuggled tobacco products.

Main findings

1. Smoking habits and consumption of non-combustible¹¹ tobacco

Three out of 10 EU citizens aged 15 and over say they smoke: a quarter (26%) smoke daily and 5% occasionally, 22% of citizens say they have quit smoking. Almost half of EU citizens claim that they have never smoked.

Men, aged 25-54 and manual workers are most likely to be daily smokers.

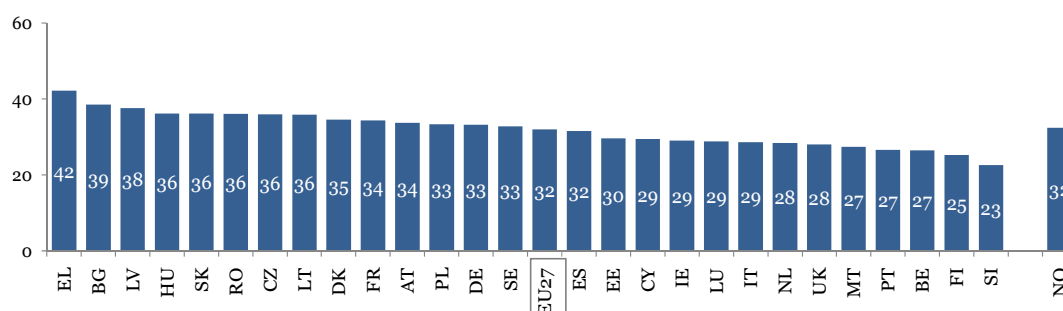
There are differences among Member States. The proportion of smokers is the highest in Greece (42%), followed by Bulgaria (39%), Latvia (37%), Romania, Hungary, Lithuania, the Czech Republic and Slovakia (all 36%).

One-tenth of respondents (9%) have at least once in their life tried non-combustible tobacco products.

Overall, the proportion of tobacco users varies between 42% and 23% of the respondents.

Tobacco users

Regular use of combustible and/or non-combustible tobacco



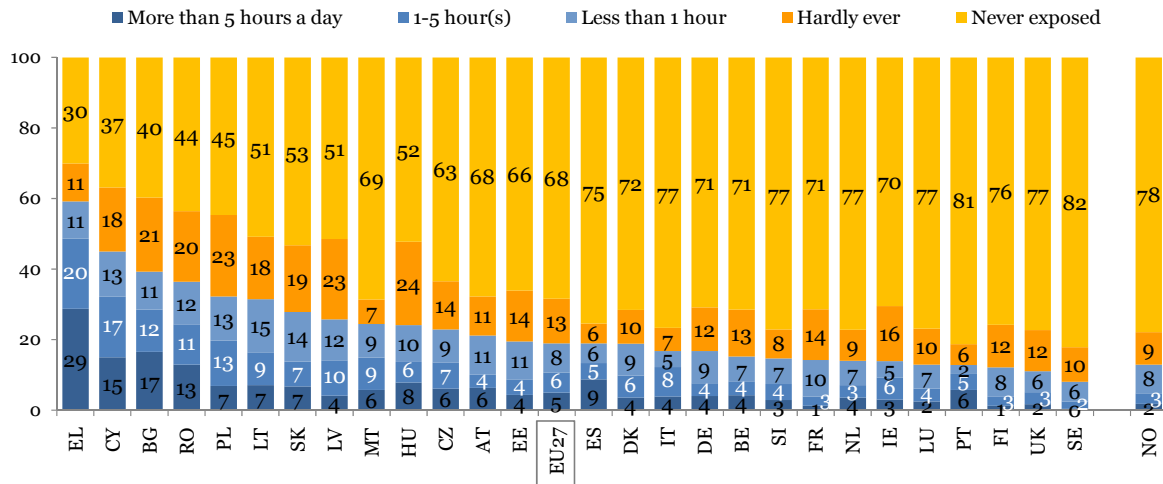
Q1. Regarding smoking cigarettes, cigars or a pipe, which of the following applies to you?
 Q2. Regarding oral tobacco such as snuff, snus or chewing tobacco, which of the following applies to you?
 Base: all respondents
 % by country

¹¹ Non-combustible tobacco in this survey refers to snuff, snus or chewing tobacco – tobacco products which do not produce smoke. Snus is a moist powder tobacco product that is consumed by placing it under the upper lip for extended periods of time. Snuff is ground or pulverised tobacco which is generally inhaled or snuffed through the nose.

2. Exposure to tobacco smoke at the workplace and at home

A fifth (19%) of respondents who work outside the home are exposed to tobacco smoke on a daily basis – almost half of them for at least one hour a day.

Amount of exposure to tobacco smoke at the workplace



Q4. At your workplace, how many hours are you exposed to tobacco smoke, on a daily basis?
Base: respondents working away from the home
% by country

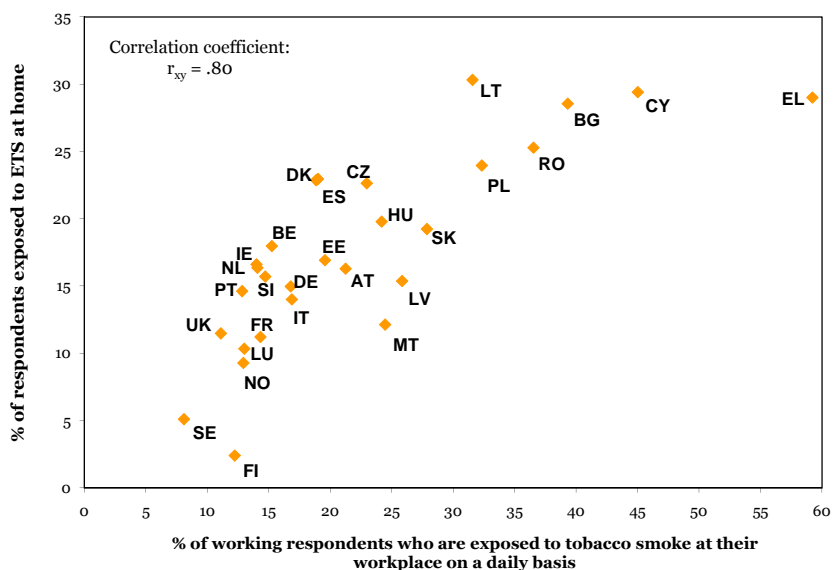
At home, 14% of non-smokers and 23% of smokers are exposed to other people’s tobacco smoke on an almost daily basis.

Home exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) is the lowest in Finland and Sweden – not more than 5% of Finns and Swedes are regularly exposed to other people’s tobacco smoke at home. Lithuanians, Cypriots, Greeks and Bulgarians are six times more likely to be exposed to ETS at home.

More than a third of smokers in the EU expose others to ETS at home. The proportion of smokers who expose others to tobacco smoke at home ranges from 8% in Finland to half of the smokers in Poland, Greece, Bulgaria and Denmark.

There is a strong correlation at the country level between exposure to second-hand smoke at work and at home.

Correlation between **second-hand smoke exposure at home** and **exposure to tobacco smoke at work** – country level



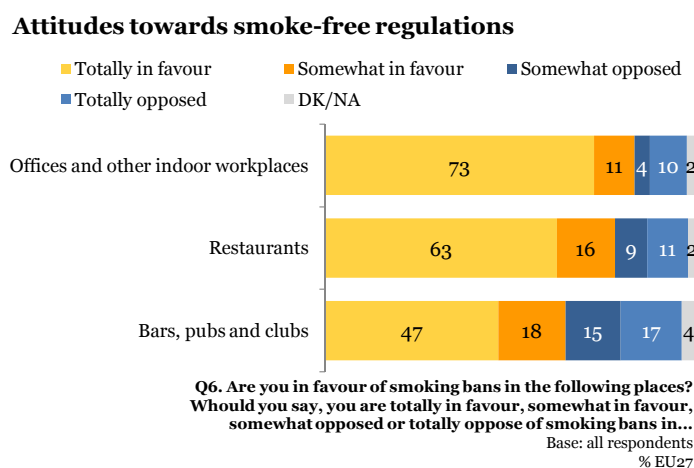
3. Status of workplace smoking restrictions

Seventeen percent of EU citizens – who work at an indoor facility – say there are no restrictions, or only very weak restrictions on smoking in their workplace.

Working in an area where smoking is not restricted is more likely to occur for men, those aged over 54, people with the lowest levels of education, the self-employed and manual workers.

4. Attitudes towards smoke-free public places

A majority of EU citizens support smoke-free public places, such as offices, restaurants and bars. Support for workplace smoking restrictions is slightly higher than support for such restrictions in restaurants (84% vs. 79%). Two-thirds support smoke-free bars, pubs and clubs.



Support for smoking restrictions in public places is the highest in Italy and Sweden, while the Czechs, Austrians and Dutch are found to be among the least supportive for such restrictions.

Half of the smokers are in favour of smoking restrictions in bars compared to seven out of 10 non-smoking respondents.

5. Perceived effectiveness of health warnings on tobacco packs

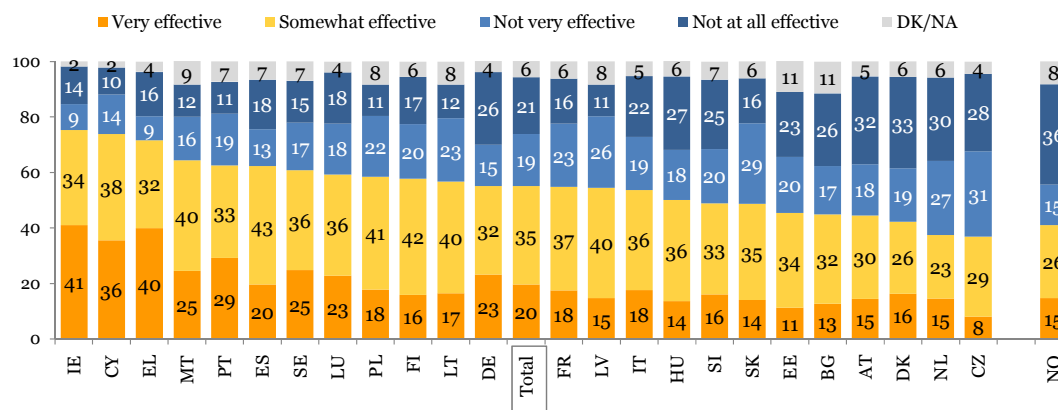
Three out of 10 EU citizens think that health warnings on tobacco packs are effective in informing them about the negative health effects of tobacco.

It is also relevant to note that three out of 10 non-smokers perceive health warnings as being effective in preventing them from smoking and a fifth of smokers think the warnings are effective in persuading them to smoke less or to quit.

Younger respondents, the less-educated respondents and manual workers appear to be slightly more likely to perceive health warnings on tobacco packs as being effective.

With regard to **pictorial warnings**, more than half (55%) of EU citizens believe that adding a colour picture to a text-only health warning strengthens the effectiveness of the text-only warning. This percentage is higher in Romania (61%) and the United Kingdom (56%) where pictorials were introduced in 2008. Although Belgium also uses pictorial warnings on tobacco packs, the Belgian respondents were a bit more sceptical about their effectiveness (39%).

Effectiveness of pictorial health warnings on tobacco packs



Q8a. In your opinion, how effective would adding a colour picture illustrating the health effects of smoking be in strengthening the text-only health warning?
Base: all respondents in all countries with the exception of BE, RO and UK
% by country

6. Extent of tobacco products being bought online

Less than 1% of EU citizens surveyed have ever purchased tobacco products over the Internet. This percentage is slightly higher among respondents who have tried non-combustible tobacco products – 3% of them have bought non-combustible tobacco over the Internet and 2% have bought other tobacco products online.

7. Purchasing of lower-priced cigarettes in other EU countries

Among the respondents who made a trip to another EU country, one-third brought home lower-priced cigarettes; Irish, British and French respondents are the most likely to have done so (between 63% and 70%).

8. Contact with potentially smuggled tobacco products

Over one-tenth of EU citizens (12%) have seen tobacco products being sold in the past six months which they think might have been smuggled into the country

Methodology of the Survey

The current Flash Eurobarometer on *Tobacco* (Flash N° 253), requested by the Directorate General Health and Consumers, was conducted to evaluate the EU citizens' and Norwegians' attitudes towards tobacco. The fieldwork was conducted between 13 and 17 December 2008.

Over 26,500 randomly-selected citizens aged 15 years and over were interviewed in the 27 EU Member States and in Norway. Interviews were predominantly carried out via fixed-line telephone, reaching approximately 1,000 EU citizens in each country (in Cyprus, Luxembourg and Malta the targeted size was 500). Parts of the interviews in Finland, Austria, Portugal and Italy were conducted over mobile telephones. Due to the relatively low fixed-line telephone coverage in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia, 300 individuals were sampled and interviewed on a face-to-face basis.

To correct for sampling disparities, a post-stratification weighting of the results was implemented, based on key socio-demographic variables.

Other surveys on this topic were conducted in 2002 (Special Eurobarometer 183¹²), 2005 (Special Eurobarometer 239¹³) and 2006 (Special Eurobarometer 272c¹⁴). It is important to consider that although the current survey builds on these earlier ones, it is **different** in several ways: Flash Eurobarometer 253 has covered different countries than the previous ones, the questionnaire has been re-designed and telephone interviews have replaced face-to-face discussions.

The complete Flash Eurobarometer on Tobacco (Flash N° 253) can be consulted online: http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_publication/eurobarometers_en.htm

Background information on textual and pictorial health warnings: http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/Tobacco/pictorial_warnings_en.htm

The Report of the Green Paper Consultation – Towards a Europe free from tobacco smoke: policy options at EU level: http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/Tobacco/Documents/smoke_free_frep_en.pdf

¹² http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_183_en.pdf

¹³ http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_239_en.pdf

¹⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_272c_en.pdf