



E-cigarettes Myth Buster

1. “The EU has banned e-cigarettes”

The new legislation does not ban e-cigarettes, nor was there ever a plan to ban such products. Not only can consumers still buy and use e-cigarettes, they now benefit from improved safety and quality requirements.

2. “If you have not banned them, what have you done?”

The new rules for e-cigarettes aim at harmonising the quality and safety requirements of the products for the benefit of consumers. In addition, rules on packaging and labelling ensure that consumers are better informed.

3. “Why regulate a product that helps people quit smoking?”

E-cigarettes are a new product category, which is growing rapidly and simulates smoking behaviour. A concern for public health is that e-cigarettes will be increasingly used by young people and non-smokers.

4. “These are not products that pose a health risk”

Nicotine is an addictive and toxic substance. The Commission has received notifications concerning the safety of e-cigarettes, i.e. there are significant differences between what is on the label and the true levels of nicotine inside. The long term effects of e-cigarettes on public health are not yet known.

5. **“There is no proof that e-cigarettes are a gateway to smoking or attractive to young people”**

E-cigarettes simulate smoking behaviour and can lead to further experimentation with other nicotine-containing products. Recent studies suggest that e-cigarettes are increasingly used by non-smokers and young people. For example a French study of 2013 revealed that the number of Parisian students experimenting with e-cigarettes has doubled in one year reaching 18%.

6. **“Will I still be able to decide what nicotine dose I use?”**

Consumers can buy e-cigarettes in a range of dosages but the maximum amount of nicotine is 20 mg per ml. This concentration has been shown to be adequate for the majority of smokers that use an e-cigarette to substitute smoking. Consumers may buy e-cigarettes with higher concentration levels if approved under pharmaceutical framework

7. **“Why regulate a product that doesn’t even contain nicotine?”**

The Directive only covers e-cigarettes which contain nicotine. Member States can decide at national level how to regulate nicotine free e-cigarettes.

8. **“No one was consulted on these rules”**

The Commission carried out an extensive public consultation on the revision of the Tobacco Products Directive (http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/consultations/tobacco_cons_01_en.htm) and published a report assessing the impact of the proposed regulatory changes (http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/docs/tobacco_ia_rand_en.pdf). E-cigarette associations were also granted the possibility to make their views known.

9. **“What will these rules mean for manufacturers of e-cigarettes?”**

In addition to manufacturing their products in line with the Directive’s rules on safety, quality and packaging, e-cigarette manufacturers have to notify national competent authorities before placing new products on the market, report annually to the authorities and comply with specific rules on advertising and cross border distance sales.

10. **“These rules put small e-cigarette companies out of business”**

The new legislation provides for an improved functioning of the internal market and a level playing field. Small and medium-sized enterprises also benefit from clear and harmonised rules for e-cigarettes that apply throughout the EU. The Directive foresees a transitional period to give companies time to adapt to the new legislation and to sell off existing stocks insofar as it complies with relevant legislation.

