

**Question for written answer E-000848/2020
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Harald Vilimsky (ID)

Subject: Minimum prices for cigarettes

Cigarette prices vary significantly from one Member State to another. The Commission seems to think that prices should be uniform and that a minimum price should be introduced.

1. Does the Commission not regard the imposition of rules on a petty matter such as cigarette prices as an unnecessary encroachment on the autonomy of individual Member States?
2. The Commission's argument is that a uniform price would reduce the risk of cancer. However, such a step would reduce cigarette prices in more prosperous countries. What further justification can the Commission provide for its proposal, which is clearly no more than a pretext for curtailing Member States' powers?
3. Does the Commission not take the view that price adjustments can be problematical if the prices in question reflect purchasing power in the Member States concerned?