

EN
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Answer given by Ms Kyriakides
on behalf of the European Commission
(29.6.2021)

Europe's Beating Cancer Plan sets ambitious goals for future tobacco control policies in the EU, with the aim to create a 'Tobacco-Free Generation' where less than 5% of the population consumes tobacco by 2040.

Smokeless tobacco products and e-cigarettes, contain tobacco and/or nicotine, a toxic substance. They are part of the problem of tobacco and/or nicotine addiction. Safe levels of tobacco and/or nicotine consumption do not exist. This is why these products are regulated (and banned in the EU¹ in the case of oral tobacco).

In 2008, the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR) provided scientific advice to the Commission on smokeless tobacco products. This advice was taken into account when the Tobacco Products Directive was revised, leading the legislator to conclude that these products should remain regulated and that the general prohibition of oral tobacco products should be maintained.

Regarding e-cigarettes, the Commission has tasked the Scientific Committee on Health, Environment and Emerging Risks (SCHEER) with an opinion on the health effects of e-cigarettes, including their role in youth initiation and smoking cessation, to improve scientific knowledge on the subject. This opinion will form the basis for the Commission's further considerations. The SCHEER found supporting evidence for the harmful consequences of e-cigarettes consumption, as well as weak evidence for the support of electronic cigarettes' effectiveness in helping smokers to quit while the evidence on smoking reduction is assessed as weak to moderate².

¹ With the exception of Sweden.

² https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/scientific_committees/scheer/docs/scheer_o_017.pdf