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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
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Nicotine is a toxic and highly addictive substance. Using nicotine containing products can be a gateway to nicotine addiction and tobacco consumption which accounts for 25% of all cancer deaths globally and is the primary cause of lung cancer according to the World Health Organization (WHO) data from 2025¹.

The WHO has noted that nicotine containing products, in particular e-cigarettes and nicotine pouches, generate substances known to cause cancer and expose users to carcinogens. For this reason, these products are associated with an increased cancer risk. The consumption of nicotine has many other negative effects, for example, in children and adolescents it has deleterious long-term impacts on brain development, potentially leading to learning and anxiety disorder. According to the WHO, more than 14 million adolescents aged 13–15 years are currently using e-cigarettes globally and in countries with data, adolescents are on average nine times more likely than adults to vape².

The ongoing evaluation of the Tobacco Products Directive 2014/40/EU³ and the Tobacco Advertising Directive 2003/33/EC⁴ involves considering a wide array of scientific, market, and regulatory developments, including the emergence of new tobacco and nicotine products. The evaluation follows a structured and evidence-based approach in line with the Better Regulation requirements. The findings from this evaluation will inform the next steps concerning the two Directives.

¹ <https://www.who.int/europe/news-room/fact-sheets/item/effects-of-tobacco-on-health>.

² <https://iris.who.int/server/api/core/bitstreams/2eca3aea-b772-4272-a2ae-6fa26f3f9cd5/content>.

³ <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2014/40/oj>.

⁴ <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2003/33/oj>.