

Legalising tobacco snus in the European Union

Adopted at the YEPP Council Meeting in Bucharest (Romania), 30/09/2022

Recognising that:

1. Since 1992, the sale of snus has been forbidden in the EU. In the Swedish accession treaty, Sweden got an opt-out for snus and is thus the only country in the EU where the sale of snus is allowed.
2. Other non-smoking tobacco products have been allowed to continue to be sold such as snuff (tobacco that is used by nasal inhalation) and chewing tobacco.
3. Snus has a long history in the Nordic countries originating from its introduction in Sweden in the 17th century.
4. In the tobacco directive (2014/40/EU), snus was also regulated in how it should be presented to the consumer as well as its contents.

Acknowledging that:

1. Sweden is the country with proportionality the fewest number of smokers in the EU with an average of 6.4% percent of smokers in the population, compared with an EU average of 24 % (Eurostat Tobacco Consumption health statistics 2019).
2. According to a tobacco consumption study conducted in 2016, Sweden has the lowest prevalence of second-hand smoking (5.9%).
3. The medical university hospital, Karolinska Institute, has concluded in its research that while snus has the same risk as cigarettes when it comes to type-2 diabetes, it has showed no relations to cancer and is far less dangerous than cigarettes.
4. A study by professor in public health Hans Giljam, showed that snus was the most common and most successful way to quit smoking in his study of 3,583 men aged between 20 and 50 years old.

5. Other smokeless tobacco with historical ties in different regions of Europe such as snuff and chewing tobacco is allowed for sale all around Europe in the spirit of the single market and free trade.
6. The consumption of non-tobacco nicotine snus products has grown rapidly across the EU in recent years. It makes little sense for nicotine snus to be widely available for cheap prices while tobacco snus, which is more helpful in assisting smokers to quit, is entirely illegal.
7. Legalising tobacco snus would undermine the black-market sale of this product which is currently taking place throughout the EU.
8. The EU needs to push harder to prevent the smoking of inhaled tobacco, particularly amongst young people where the usage of e-cigarettes and vaping is rising. Legalising tobacco snus would add to that push.

YEPP calls on:

1. The European Commission, European Council and the European Parliament to legalise the sale of tobacco snus in line with Sweden to reduce the rate of smoking and the negative impacts of inhalable tobacco.