

Roadmap to a Tobacco- and Nicotine-Free Finland 2030



TYPE
STATUS

Legal framework

LAST
UPDATE

September 2021

FINLAND • NATIONAL
Primary prevention

PROBLEM & OBJECTIVE

PROBLEM Manufacturers of tobacco and nicotine products are constantly bringing new products to the market in order to create and maintain nicotine addiction. The focus has widened from smoking to new ways of using tobacco and nicotine products.

OBJECTIVE The goal of the Finnish Tobacco Act is to end the use of tobacco and other nicotine containing products by 2030. In order to achieve the endgame goal, different actions must be developed and implemented.

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KEY COMPONENTS / STEPS

- Finland was the first country in the world to set an endgame goal in 2010 included in the Tobacco Act. A key leader in this was the Speaker of the Parliament, Mr. Paavo Lipponen.
- Tobacco-Free Finland Network was created to coordinate concrete measures to influence political decision making and action. The network includes NGOs and governmental organisations.
- In the Tobacco Act reform in 2016, a new goal was enlarged to cover also nicotine-containing products set to achieve tobacco- and nicotine-free Finland by 2030. The goal was defined achieved if less than 5 % of the general population use daily the products regulated under the Act.
- In 2016, Finland introduced pioneering e-cigarette regulation, which covered flavour bans, age limits to buyers, prohibitions of marketing, displaying and distance selling, import restrictions and bans on use in non-smoking areas.
- In 2018, an inter-sectoral working group prepared 44 proposals to legislation and other policy measures in order to achieve the goal. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health appointed the working group.
- In 2021, part of the proposed amendments to the Tobacco Act were included in the draft government proposal.
- Each government until 2030 should investigate and evaluate how to achieve the endgame goal and propose further actions.

KEY CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

- The Finnish strategy does not support "harm reduction" policy. It means that the products like smokeless tobacco or e-cigarettes are not promoted. We want to get rid of all tobacco and nicotine products as we do not want to have nicotine addicted population.
- Legislation of the endgame goal is a key, but a comprehensive approach to implement actions to reach the goal is also needed.
- Consensus and cooperation among members of the tobacco control community is essential. Tobacco-Free Network 2030 is the key actor in Finland.
- It is important to have international collaboration and support, e.g. WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and EU Tobacco Products Directive.

MAIN IMPACTS / ADDED VALUE

- Smoking has decreased a lot among adolescents and adults. Nowadays Finns are among the least smoking countries in Europe.
- It is demonstrated that it is possible to reduce the number of smokers without seeing an increase in e-cigarette users.
- The goal is widely acknowledged among public, also among daily smokers, and politicians.
- The differences in smoking have not diminished between different socio-economic groups.
- Tax policy is not included in the scope of the Tobacco Act, but it is an important part of tobacco policy. Tobacco tax and prices have increased regularly.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Clear aim, can be measured and monitored.
- The aim is in the legislation.
- Comprehensive and cross-sectoral approach.
- Political climate and public opinion is supportive.
- Evidence-based and cost-effective action.
- Organized partnership between NGOs and government.
- Regular monitoring and review of progress.
- Difficult to find effective measures to diminish socio-economic disparities.
- Slow process.
- Tobacco industry interference.
- Insufficient funding for supportive actions.
- Lack of resources (e.g. cessation services in health care).

REFERENCES & DOCUMENTATION

- Development of tobacco and nicotine policy. Proposals for action by the working group. Reports and Memorandum of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 46/2018. Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Helsinki 2018.

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