

The Madrid 2023 Declaration ‘For a Tobacco-Free Generation’

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The consequences of tobacco are devastating. Not only is tobacco use the leading cause of preventable disease and death in Europe and worldwide, but it also harms our planet, causing environmental damage along the whole cycle from the cultivation of tobacco plants to post-production consumer waste. All variants of tobacco and related products are harmful, and there is no safe threshold of exposure.

All types of tobacco and non-medicinal nicotine products are highly addictive, and have detrimental effects on the environment. We know that it is possible to significantly reduce the threat and impact of tobacco use by taking appropriate action. And yet:

- Authorities and society at large (with each one of us bearing responsibility) lack the courage needed to eradicate this threat;
- A wide range of novel and emerging tobacco and related nicotine products have aggressively penetrated the European market, which needs to be much more strictly regulated.; and
- Certain population groups are more vulnerable and suffer more intensely from this threat, and urgent measures are needed to reduce health inequality in tobacco control.

For all the above reasons, THE MADRID 2023 DECLARATION calls for the active involvement of individuals (particularly young people), institutions, companies, health professionals, media, experts, civil society, and policy makers, to join efforts to achieve the goal of a ‘Tobacco-Free Generation’ in Europe. With the purpose of accelerating advances towards this ambitious aim, the participants collectively endorsed this Declaration and committed themselves to work on the following objectives for 2030:

1. Adopt and enforce tobacco control policies to ensure full implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and existing European and national regulations and broaden the scope to include novel and emerging products.
2. Eradicate all forms of advertising and promotion of tobacco and its emerging variants (including nicotine and non-nicotine related products) on audiovisual platforms, social media, and other channels.
3. Adopt and enforce regulations to protect policy making processes from tobacco industry interference, including obligations on transparency.
4. Address the roles of social, political, cultural, behavioral, and commercial determinants of health contributing to the uptake of tobacco and related products.
5. Ensure an appropriate legislative framework that safeguards children and adolescents from tobacco and nicotine products by preventing their uptake

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- including reducing their appeal and affordability.
6. Address health inequalities by adopting structural policies and interventions to reduce disparities.
 7. Preserve the environment from the pollution and degradation linked to tobacco and related products.
 8. Encourage active citizenship to achieve a tobacco-free society.
 9. Ensure universal coverage and access to evidence-based interventions to help smokers to quit.
 10. Promote independent research and innovation on tobacco prevention and control, including data exchange and collaboration among countries, and widely share all relevant information and results with the public. We agree, unequivocally, to jointly design a realistic and achievable roadmap, with well-defined and targeted steps to make an imminent tobacco-free next generation a reality.

The time to act is now! Our children have the right to live in a tobacco-free environment. It is our ethical obligation and our responsibility to protect their health and the planet we leave for the future generations. Let us put words into action and do all we possibly can – right now – to eliminate tobacco use.

Madrid, 28 April 2023.

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