
Updates in Tobacco Control

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European Region

Make every day World No Tobacco Day.

www.who.int/tobacco



World Health
Organization

31 MAY

- Provides an overview of the current state of tobacco control in the EU, examines persistent challenges, including partial implementation of WHO FCTC measures, industry interference and regulatory gaps related to emerging products.

Link:

<https://iris.who.int/server/api/core/bitstreams/f4abb38f-af0e-4488-a398-71a34563ac1d/content>



**Two decades of the
implementation of the WHO
Framework Convention
on Tobacco Control in the
European Union: progress,
challenges and the road ahead**



JA PreventNCD
Join Action Prevent Non-Communicable Diseases



Infographics

How flavours hook new users

#TobaccoExposed

Did you know? Flavours in tobacco, nicotine and related products make them more appealing – especially to young people – by masking harsh tastes and encouraging experimentation and continued use.

Why are flavours added? Flavours improve taste and smell, hide irritation, and make products easier and more pleasant to use. This increases the chances of trying, continuing use and becoming addicted.

Are flavours safe to inhale? **No.** Many flavouring chemicals may be safe to eat – but not to inhale. Some are used in very high amounts and can cause direct harm (e.g. allergic reactions, irritated airways), especially with repeated or long-term use. Flavours can also indirectly harm health by encouraging more frequent and continuous use of harmful products.

What are flavour accessories? They are products that add flavour but do not contain tobacco or nicotine themselves, such as flavour sprays, cards, capsules and filter tips. They are made specifically to flavour tobacco products and increase their appeal.

Why does it matter?

- Flavour names, colours and imagery create highly attractive packaging that appeals strongly to young people.
- Flavours lower the perceived risk, making these products seem natural, safe or less harmful.
- Flavours are one of the top reasons that young people try nicotine and tobacco products, and often lead them from experimentation to regular use and addiction.
- They help to maintain addiction and make quitting harder.

What can we do?

Ban flavours in tobacco, nicotine and related products to make them less attractive and appealing, especially to children and young people.	Where bans are not possible, strictly regulate the use and marketing of flavouring chemicals.	Prohibit or restrict flavour accessories.	Monitor emerging products and flavours and watch for illegal markets that undermine controls.
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Learn more
The role of flavours in increasing the appeal of tobacco, nicotine and related products. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2025 (<https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/information-sheet-the-role-of-flavours-in-increasing-the-appeal-of-tobacco-nicotine-and-related-products>, accessed 2 February 2026).
Flavour accessories in tobacco products enhance attractiveness and appeal. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2025 (<https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/information-sheet-flavour-accessories-in-tobacco-products-enhance-attractiveness-and-appeal>, accessed 2 February 2026).

How industries manipulate products and marketing

#TobaccoExposed

Did you know? Tobacco and nicotine companies engineer their products and use deceptive marketing to mislead the public, attract new users and keep people addicted.

How do they do it? These tactics downplay harm, encourage experimentation and make long-term use more likely.

Common strategies are to:

use misleading terms – “light”, “mild”, “organic”, “clean” and “low risk”	engineer nicotine delivery and absorption – altered blends, additives, pH and nicotine salts	use flavours and additives – sugars, cooling agents, and sweet or fruity flavours	mislabel products – inaccurate nicotine levels or hidden flavours
use new and emerging products – e-cigarettes, heated tobacco products, nicotine pouches promoted as being safer or for quitting	influence science – funding research or shaping evidence to fit their agenda	use social media marketing – influencers and online promotion reaching young people	

What everyone should know

- All tobacco and nicotine products are addictive, contain toxic substances and cause harm.
- Lower toxicant levels does not mean a lower health risk – levels of some toxicants are higher in new products.
- Using new products can derail quit attempts and trigger relapse.
- Many people who quit cigarettes continue using new nicotine products.
- New products have not been proven to be effective for quitting at population level.

What can we do?

Stay informed and support the strong regulation of nicotine and tobacco products	Expose manipulative tactics and hold industry accountable	Rely on independent, credible evidence – not industry messaging	Protect health policies from industry interference	Ban all forms of advertising, promotion and sponsorship, including online
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Learn more
Manipulation and marketing strategies used by tobacco and nicotine industries to promote their products. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2025 (<https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/information-sheet-manipulation-and-marketing-strategies-used-by-tobacco-and-nicotine-industries-to-promote-their-products>, accessed 2 February 2026).

How product design hooks users

#TobaccoExposed

Did you know? Tobacco and nicotine products are engineered to look harmless, feel smooth and keep people using them.

What are design features? Design features are deliberate product manipulations that make them attractive, facilitate easy and discreet use, and mask the harm.

Common tactics include the use of:

bright colours and attractive design – distract from health warnings	filters – promoted as “safer” and thus give a false sense of security	slim shapes – signal light and elegant	mini packs – cheaper, easier to try smoking
trendy devices – sleek, modern and “techy”	kid-friendly appearance – like toys and sweets	compact and concealable devices – disguised as pens, memory sticks or watches	custom features – adjustable vapour, lights and/or music

Why does it matter? These features are not needed; rather, they are strategic. They lower the perceived risk, encourage experimentation and make long-term use more likely. The result is a higher likelihood of initiation, sustained use and long-term addiction.

What can we do?

Expose deceptive design tactics	Ban features that attract young people	Use plain packaging and remove filters	Set limits on device power and features that allow manipulation
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Learn more
Understanding the design features of tobacco, nicotine and related products and their possible effects. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2025 (<https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/information-sheet-understanding-the-design-features-of-tobacco-nicotine-and-related-products-and-their-possible-effects>, accessed 2 February 2026).

Tobacco control playbook supplements:



Link:

<https://www.who.int/europe/publications/i/item/WHO-EURO-2026-3700-43459-83015>



European Region

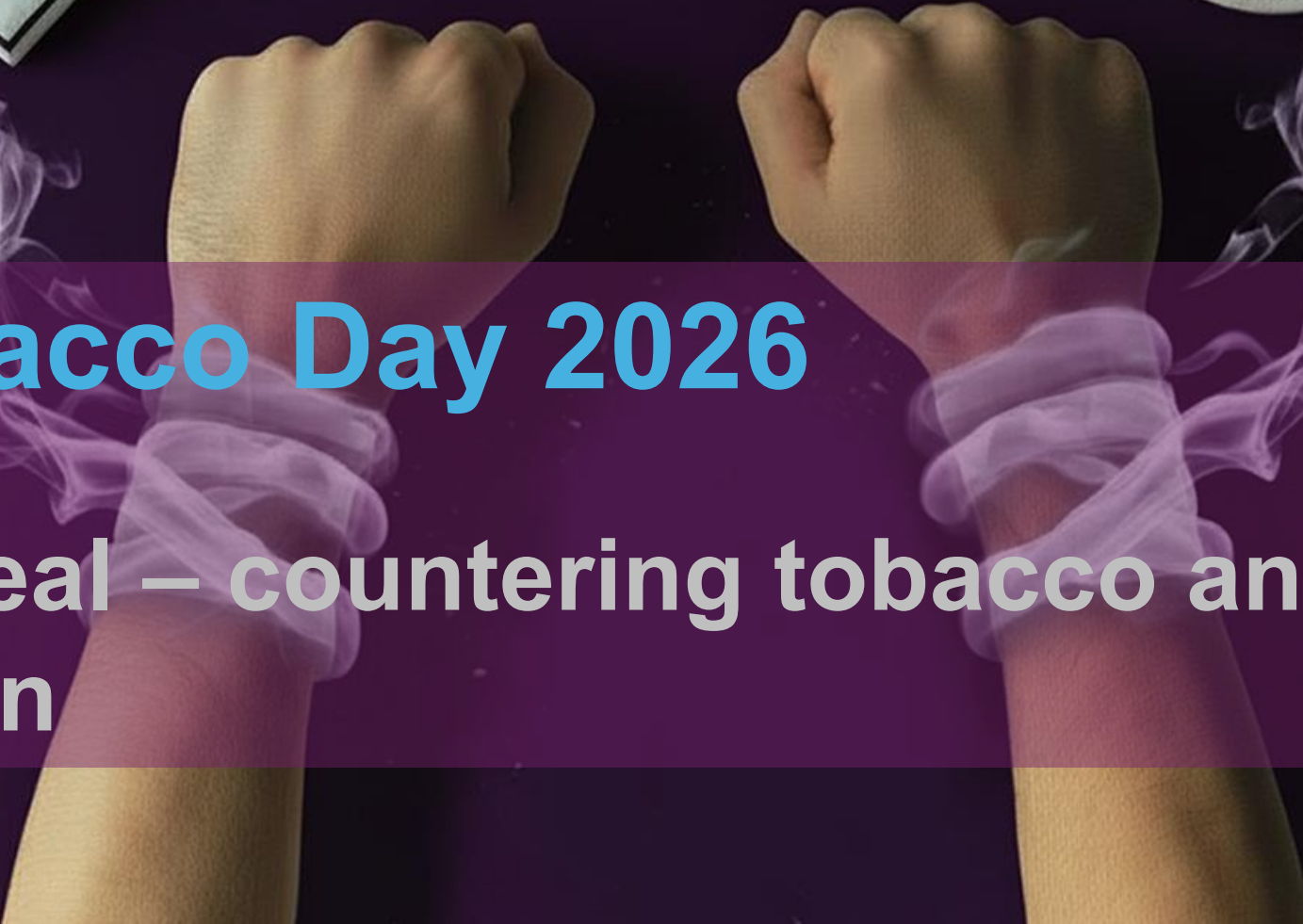
Other 3 will be published by the end of 2026:

- **Flavour bans** are essential to protect young people from nicotine and tobacco products
- New and emerging nicotine products do not support **population-level smoking cessation**
- **Extending smokefree protections** to e-cigarettes safeguards public health

- Provides an overview of tobacco industry strategies used to market and promote nicotine pouches and highlights policy options for their effective regulation

Link: <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240114920>

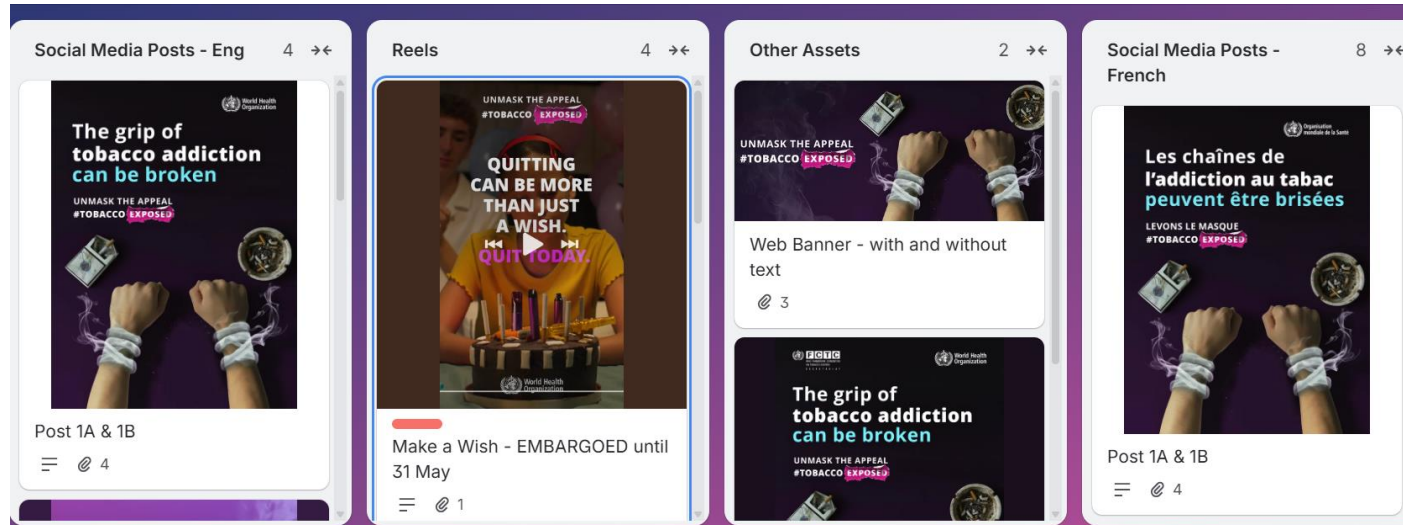
**Exposing marketing
tactics and strategies
driving the global growth
of nicotine pouches**

Two raised fists, one on the left and one on the right, with smoke rising from the wrists, symbolizing resistance or protest.

World No Tobacco Day 2026

Unmask the appeal – countering tobacco and
nicotine addiction

WHO HQ – WNTD 2026 communication materials



Link: <https://trello.com/b/NL6mh17H/who-world-no-tobacco-day-2026>

Webinar – registration will be available



WHO Europe – WNTD 2026 communication materials

✓ World No Tobacco Day 2026

> Social media tiles - EURO

> Social media - Infographics

Link:

<https://who.canto.global/v/U23BAUEF3S/foIder/VHRTI?viewIndex=0>



Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FAAnsYAztt2g&t=2s>

News: [World No Tobacco Day 2026: the next nicotine revolution is already here](#)

Feature story: [Young people at Project Zero are fighting back against the tobacco industry](#)

WHO Europe webpage: <https://www.who.int/europe/event/world-no-tobacco-day-2026>

World No Tobacco Day 2026 Workshop (Madrid, 29 May 2026)

Promoting a healthier, tobacco-free future in Europe

WNTD 2026 Awardees



General photo

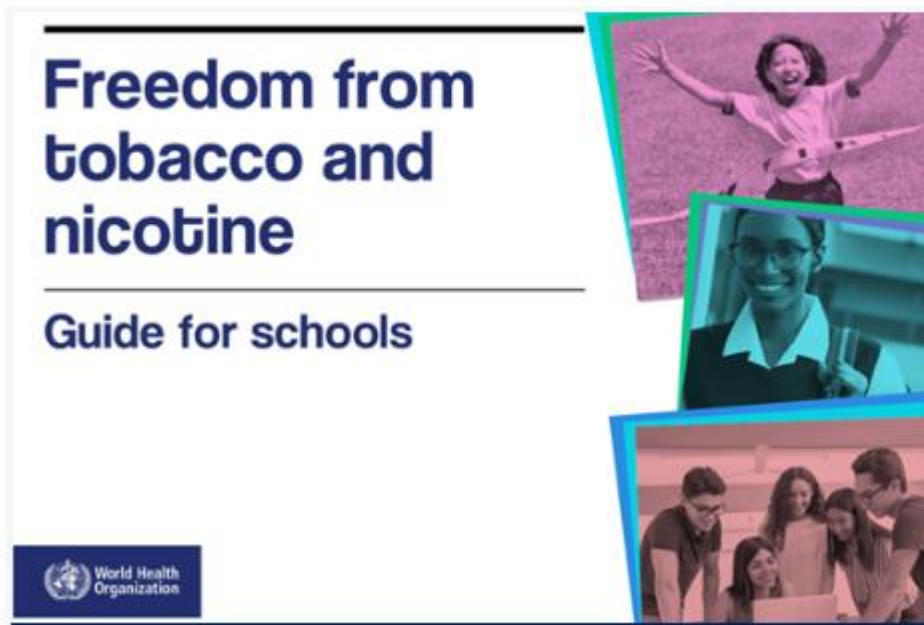


Technical workshop: Law and Tobacco Control Workshop: Global and European perspectives (Copenhagen, 11-12 June 2026)



Additional materials for schools will be available by the end of 2026

Make your school nicotine and tobacco-free



Upcoming publications

- **Information sheets:** Tobacco and Nicotine Addiction; Nicotine Pouches and Product Standards.
- **Trends in Prevalence** of Tobacco Use in the WHO European Region
- **Oral Smokeless Tobacco Products** in the WHO European Region

Webinar: “Strengthening the Tobacco Cessation Ecosystem: Strategies for Improving Access, Use, Success, Synergy and Impact at the National, Subnational and Organizational Levels.”

Speakers:

- Dr. Tim McAfee (Chair, WHO Tobacco Cessation Guideline Development Group and Former Director, Office on Smoking & Health, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- Dr. Vinayak Prasad (Unit Head, Tobacco Free Initiative in the Department of Health Determinants, Promotion and Prevention, World Health Organization)
- Dr. Gan Quan (Senior Vice President, Tobacco Control, Vital Strategies)
- Dr. Tara Singh Bam (Director, Asia Pacific, Tobacco Control, Vital Strategies)
- Dr. Puneet Chahar (Technical Advisor, Cessation, India, Vital Strategies)

Thursday, June 25th 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM CEST (Geneva)

Register:

https://vitalstrategies.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_PNzhITjhSlSSs3lxriDNuQ#/registraton

Upcoming event in 2026

04 December 2026

ICO-WHO
SYMPOSIA
ON TOBACCO CONTROL

Barcelona, Spain

No child should become addicted

UNMASK THE APPEAL
#TOBACCO EXPOSED

