

Pricing smokers out of the market

The massive increase in tobacco taxation in recent years has been a disproportionate attack on Europe's smokers.

In January 2017 an average of **79.6%** of the price of a pack of cigarettes in the EU was duties and taxes (89.4% in Greece, 77.9% in Austria, for example).

Many smokers come from poorer backgrounds meaning **those who earn the least have been hit hardest** by tax increases.

Price rises are driving people who can't afford it towards the black market.

Funding criminal gangs

Europe has some of the most expensive cigarettes in the world, but they can be bought for as little as **€1.30 a pack on the black market**.

Criminals don't respect age restrictions. They will happily sell cigarettes to children.

If all cigarettes sold on the black market were sold legally, the budget of the EU and its Member States would receive above **€10 billion** annually.



Focus on what works

Instead of targeting adults who choose to smoke, we should focus on strategies that are proven to reduce youth smoking rates.

Targeted education programmes are needed in schools to **make sure children are aware of the risks of smoking** from a young age.

Tobacco **taxes must be cut** to reduce demand for black market cigarettes with stiffer penalties for those who sell cigarettes to children.



What we are asking for

The war on tobacco is a smokescreen for government failure in other areas. Forest EU urges policy makers to:

▶ **Stop treating Europe's adult smokers like second-class citizens.**

▶ **Respect their right** to make informed choices about smoking a legal product.

▶ **Reduce the punitive tax on tobacco** and stop encouraging illicit trade.

▶ **Conduct an evidence-based review of the impact of the revised Tobacco Products Directive (TPD2)** and attempt no further legislation on tobacco before the Directive has met its objectives.

#SmokersAreCitizensToo

Forest EU Manifesto



Europe's second class citizens

Smokers represent 26% of the population in the European Union.

They are subject to a series of punitive measures, including smoking bans, display bans, grotesque health warnings and excessive taxation.

Smokers contributed **€81 billion** to the public budgets in excise duties in 2015.



EU countries are among the most regulated places on earth in which to smoke. Smokers have generally accepted the many restrictions with good grace, but **enough is enough**.

By denying smokers the ability to smoke in comfort, policy makers are deliberately **'denormalising' smokers**, trying to ostracise them from the community.

Smokers must be allowed to smoke in public places where there is no significant inconvenience to others. Public bans establish worrying precedents about the role of the state in governing people's private lives. **If we're not allowed to smoke in a park, what's next?**

There is no evidence that plain packaging affects the number of young people smoking, which is the main reason for its introduction.

The Commission and EU governments are punishing smokers unfairly. **Adults who choose to smoke have every right to do so** without being under constant attack from policy makers.

CAUTION: If you don't smoke but enjoy alcohol, sugary drinks and convenience food you should be concerned by tobacco control measures because these kind of excessive regulations are coming for your choices too.



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